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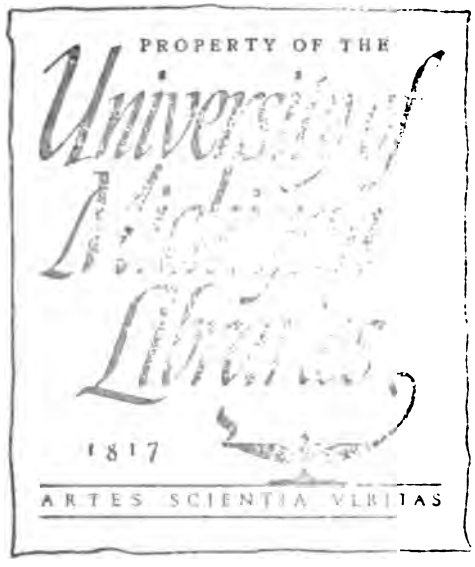
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1817
ARTES SCIENTIA VERITAS

UNITARIANISM DEFENDED:

A SERIES OF LECTURES

BY

THREE PROTESTANT DISSENTING MINISTERS
OF LIVERPOOL:

IN REPLY TO

A COURSE OF LECTURES, ENTITLED "UNITARIANISM CONFUTED," BY THIRTEEN CLERGYMEN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

"Would to Heaven that Christians had their own 'vail' of orthodox words taken away from their minds; that limiting Orthodoxy to the acceptance of the Christ as the SPIRIT ('the Lord is that Spirit,' says St. Paul), i. e., the meaning, the end of all revelation, they would not allow a new *letter*, consisting of abstract doctrines, to involve their minds in a 'vail' which obstructs the view of the Gospel, even more than the old letter, which kept the Jews in bondage."—*Heresy and Orthodoxy, by Rev. J. Blanco White*, p. 53, 2nd edition.

LIVERPOOL:
WILLMER AND SMITH, 32, CHURCH STREET.
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1839.

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WILLMER AND SMITH,
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PREFACE.

THE length of the following Discourse rendered it necessary to omit large portions of it in the delivery; the remainder has undergone no alteration in preparing the Lecture for the press.

It is one of the duties of the controversialist to drop each subject of debate so soon as every thing materially affecting it has been advanced; and to seize the time for silence, as promptly as the time for speech. This consideration would have led me to abstain from any further remarks respecting the Improved Version, did it not appear that it is considered disrespectful to pass without notice any argument adduced by our opponents. In briefly adverting to Mr. Byrth's strictures on my former Lecture, contained in the Preface to his own, I am more anxious to avert from myself the imputation of discourtesy to him than to disprove his charge of "PITIFUL EVASION;" which even the accuser himself, I imagine, cannot permanently esteem just.

Notwithstanding the criticisms of my respected opponent, I still maintain that a Subscriber to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association is no more responsible for the alleged delinquencies of the Improved Version, than is a Subscriber to the British and Foreign Bible Society for the known departures from the true standard of the text which its funds are employed to circulate. Mr. Byrth appears to enumerate three particulars, in which he thinks that the parallelism between these two cases fails:

First; "The Authorized Version does not profess to be a *systematic Interpretation*. It is not, in one word, a *Creed* and an *Exposition*. It is only a literal *translation*, without note or comment." So much the worse, must we not say? Whatever deception a false text can produce, is thus wholly concealed and undiscoverable; the counterfeit passes into circulation, undistinguished from the pure gold of the Divine Word, bearing on its front the very same image and superscription. Did this version "*profess* to be a *systematic Interpretation*," readers would be on their guard; but while p[illegible] *fessing to be "without note or comment,"* it inserts "a note" or gl[illegible] *the case of the Heavenly Witnesses)* into the *text itself*. The de[illegible]

bearing of this and other readings, in which Griesbach's differs from the Received Text, makes the Authorized Version, *quoad hoc*, a creed, while it disclaims this character.

Secondly; To constitute the Parallelism, the Bible Society ought to be, "The Trinitarian Society for promoting Christian Knowledge," avowedly publishing an "Improved Version of the Scriptures," &c. So long, then, as Churchmen abstain from proposing "an Improved Version," and designate their societies by neutral names, they may be acquitted, "in foro conscientiæ," for retaining any corruptions which may happen to exist in the *un-improved* Translation. It is easy to conjecture that, on this principle, it will be long before the Church incurs the needless guilt of an "Improved Version." Surely the frank avowal, by the words "Trinitarian Society," of a party purpose, would rather abate than augment the culpability of retaining a Trinitarian gloss; since the reader would have fair warning that the work was edited under Theological bias. And one of the most serious charges against "the Improved Version" was precisely this: that its first edition was without party badge (the word *Unitarian* not appearing in the title); so that it might possibly deceive the unwary.

Thirdly; The parallelism is said to fail *in extent*; the peculiarities of the Improved Version being much more numerous, and sustained by less evidence, than the false readings of the Authorized Translation. I cannot concur in this remark, so far as it affects the evidence against 1 John v. 7. But I pass by this matter of opinion, to protest against the unjust exaggeration of a matter of fact, contained in Mr. Byrth's supposition of a Trinitarian counterpart to the Improved Version. He speaks of "a text corrected on the principles of" "*Theological* criticism and conjecture:"—he knows that *not one text* is so corrected; that Griesbach's second edition is followed without variation; that any proposed deviations from it are only typographically indicated, or suggested and defended in the notes. He speaks of the retention of "questionable passages," without "notice that their authenticity had ever been doubted;" and the expunging of as many perplexing doctrinal texts as possible:—he knows that *not one word* of the most approved text is expunged, or of any less perfect text retained; and that notice is given of every deviation on the part of the Editors, in questions either of authenticity or of translation, from their standards, Griesbach and Newcome, and from the Received Text. Mr. Byrth is aware that his opponents in this controversy do not altogether admire the Improved Version; but it is not fit that advantage should be taken of this to publish extravagant descriptions of it, in which the accuracy of the scholar, and *the justice of the Christian*, are for the moment lost in the vehemence *of partizan.*

It is desirable to add, that the Society which originally published the Improved Version, has long since been merged in the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. In this larger body three other societies (of which one, at least, surpassed in scale and influence the unfortunate object of our opponents' hostility) are consolidated; and its subscription list contains the names of those who previously supported *any* of the constituent elements of the Association. Hence it can, with no propriety, be called "The Society instituted for the circulation" of the Improved Version. It cannot be alleged that a subscriber is bound to anything more than a general and preponderant approbation of the complex objects of the Association; nor does he, by retaining his name on the list of its supporters, forego his right of dissenting from particular modes of action which its Directors may adopt.

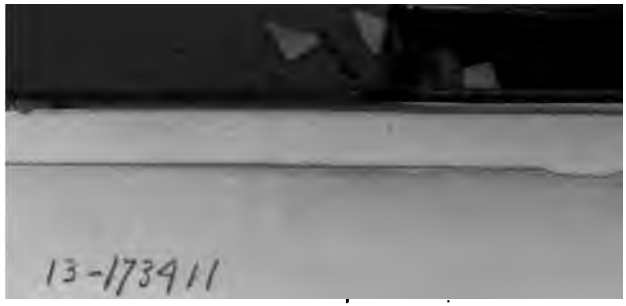
May I assure Mr. Byrth, that I did not intend to insinuate, that his strictures were produced "second-hand:" except in the sense that many of them had, in fact, been anticipated. I expressly guarded myself against any construction reflecting on the originality and literary honour of our opponents.

The remaining animadversions of Mr. Byrth, involving no public interest, and having merely personal reference to myself, I willingly pass by; knowing that they can have no power but in their truth; and in that case I should be sorry to weaken them.

ERRATA

In the Second Lecture, "The Bible: what it is, and what it is not."

Page 14, line 7 from the bottom, *after* 4th place *insert* with the Book of Acts.
— 19, line 6 from the top, *for* Gallilean *read* Galilean.
— 25, line 14 from the bottom, *for* reasons *read* reason.
— 32, line 8 from the top, *for* bold *read* bald.
— 43, line 8 from the bottom, *for* for *read* at.
— 45, line 14 from the bottom, *for* comment *read* comments.
— 49, line 13 from the bottom, *before* separated *insert* they.
— 49, line 5 from the bottom, *for* discussion *read* agitation.
— 49, line 4 from the bottom, *for* conducted *read* discussed.
— 51, note, last line, *for* 737 *read* 747.
— 56, line 9 from the top, *for* this heretic *read* these heretics.
— 57, line 4 from the bottom, *for* later *read* latter.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GENERAL PREFACE.

In this Preface, and in all the other contents of this volume, we have occupied the position of an assailed party, lending our best consideration to whatever a leagued body of resolute and unsparing adversaries could say against us. We have stood upon the defensive, not lamenting that such an occasion had occurred of exposing our views of Christianity to so severe a scrutiny, and of displaying to the world whether our position was tenable. We did not provoke this Controversy. It was of our opponents' choosing. They entered into combination, and arranged their method of attack, and invited the public attentively to look on while they performed upon us the work of destruction. With respectful attention, as men whose system of Christianity was about to be subjected to a powerful analysis by those who believed the main ingredients to be poisonous,—but with quiet hearts, as men who had no interest in this world but to discover Truth,—we have interfered no further than was necessary *to make this examination*, by carefulness, imp

tiality, and accuracy, productive of a true result. We have struck out whatever was untrue, and we have supplied whatever was wanting, to exhibit a full statement of the respective Evidences of Unitarianism and of Trinitarianism. Lecture qualifies Lecture; and Preface corrects Preface. We are satisfied to have thus placed, side by side, the contrasted views of Man and God, and to await the issues.

To return upon the "thirteen Clergymen of the Church of England" the words of their General Preface, (p. xi.) "*it is no uncommon practice in modern criticism to neglect the statements*" of an opponent's case, as if they never had been made, and the corrections passed upon one's own as if they never had been experienced. It is the policy of the "thirteen Clergymen" to *reiterate*, nothing daunted, arguments, our careful replies to which are not even noticed, and misrepresentations whose injustice had solemnly been protested against. By these resolute repetitions some are seduced to believe, and attention is withdrawn from the overthrow of an error or a calumny by the hardihood with which it rises from its fall, and reasserts itself. Strike them down;—they get up, and coolly offer themselves to be struck down again. Great ought to be the power of Truth; for great is the vitality and the power of effrontery in a popular error. It is only in the long combat of years and generations that the *Real* manifests at last its imperishable quality. The "General Preface" quietly gathers up all the "*disjecta membra*" of

error and misstatement, and without a word of answer to our analysis of their character, presents them again to have sentence and execution passed upon them. It is a careful redintegration of the broken particles, which in our simplicity we had hoped would not so readily reunite. We are obliged, therefore, by way at once of Preface and of Protest, to repeat our solemn contradiction of some most strenuous misrepresentations, and to attempt again the exposure of some fallacies most tenacious of life.

I. It was distinctly stated by us in the course of this Controversy, that not upon any grounds of *literary evidence* did we discredit those prefaces which relate to the miraculous (or as, in insult to the purest and holiest human feelings, our opponents are not ashamed to call it, the *immaculate*) conception; and that our estimate of them was formed solely upon grounds of inherent incredibility, and of proved inconsistencies both with themselves and with the general statements of the New Testament. Yet in total disregard of this our denial, the Preface (p. xiii.) reasserts the charge, as if it never had been contradicted. We also distinctly stated that the miraculous conception *in no way interfered with Unitarianism*,—that many Humanitarians believed in it; yet it is *the policy* of Trinitarianism to *repeat*, that we pervert these portions of Scripture, for the sake of evading a fact fatal to our system. Unitarianism is so little concerned to evade the fact of a miraculous conception, that many Unitarians them-

selves adopt it. It is the "tactics" of the "thirteen Clergymen," their system "of holy war," (*see Preface to Mr. Ould's Lecture*) to ignore whatever we may say on our own behalf, either in way of correction or of defence, and to reassert the false statement.

II. The "Unitarian Creed" is described by our reverend opponents as "*a mere code of unbelief*," (p. xiv.) it being the policy of the "thirteen Clergymen," not only to pay no regard to our most solemn assertion of our faith in Christianity, as God's full and perfect revelation to man, but also to assume to themselves the functions of infallible judges of what is Christianity, and what is not; and so, again to return upon them their own language, to "deify their own fallible" (p. xii.) interpretations and inferences. Yet they can impose upon the simplicity of the world, by charging others with the "pride of reason." Infallible themselves, to differ from their infallibility can of course be nothing else than the *pride* of reason.

III. It is stated (p. xv.), that we "utterly deny" "the eternity of punishments," without adding *what we have added*, that the moral consequences of actions *are eternal*, and that in its influence on character and progress, the retribution of every evil thought or deed *is everlasting*. What we *do* deny, as the blackest misrepresentation that can be conceived of the God of Providence, whose glory it is to lead his children to Himself, is the horribly distinct statement of their own "General Preface"—"*that the sufferings of the lost*

are not intended for their amendment, but as a satisfaction to divine justice, when the hour of pardon shall have passed away." (p. xv.) Is this the Religion, and this the God of Love? These are the men who make the Unbelief, of which they afterwards so blindly and bitterly complain. If such was Christianity, unbelief would be a virtue, a prompting of devotion, a protest on behalf of God.

IV. Our doubt as to the existence of, or necessity for, an external Devil, permitted by God to ruin the souls of men, has been converted to two uses in this Preface;—first, as manifesting that we are ourselves under the power of the subtlest device of Satan, who has concealed from us his existence, that he might lead us captive at his will; and, secondly, that though denying the existence of Satan, we are yet ourselves the emissaries of Satan; for that as the Devil tempted Eve, and our Lord himself, by perversions of the Word of God, so Unitarianism, by its interpretations, is his present instrument,—in fact, Satan himself tempting the world by the word of God, as of old he tempted Eve and Christ. (pp. xv. xvi.) We leave this matter to the judgment of men whose sense of propriety and decency has not been borrowed exclusively from the influences of a dogmatic Theology.

V. It is said of us (p. xvi.), contrary to our own most distinct averment in this very Controversy, that "according to the theologians of this unhappy school, it seems to be almost a fundamental rule, that no doc-

trine ought to be acknowledged as true in its nature, or divine in its origin, of which all the parts are not level to human understanding: and that whatever the Scriptures teach concerning the counsels of Jehovah, and the plan of his salvation, must be modified, curtailed, and attenuated, in such a manner, by the transforming power of art and argument, as to correspond with the poor and narrow capacities of our intelligence."

Where are the simplicity, the sincerity, the love of Truth, which alone can make Controversy fruitful of good results, when such a representation of the spirit of our Theology *can* be given by "thirteen Clergymen" *after* we had published the following words in our fifth Lecture (p. 9), for their special instruction:— "Let me guard myself from the imputation of rejecting this doctrine *because it is mysterious*; or of supporting a system which insists on banishing all mysteries from religion. On any such system I should look with unqualified aversion, as excluding from faith one of its primary elements; as obliterating the distinction between logic and devotion, and tending only to produce an irreverent and narrow-minded dogmatism. 'Religion without mystery' is a combination of terms, than which the Athanasian Creed contains nothing more contradictory; and the sentiment of which it is the motto, I take to be a fatal caricature of rationalism, [illegible] to bring all piety into contempt. Until we touch upon the mysterious, we are not in con-

tact with religion; nor are any objects reverently regarded by us, except such as, from their nature or their vastness, are felt to transcend our comprehension." Nay, it is not a little remarkable, that the very illustration employed by the "thirteen Clergymen" to exhibit our absurdity in rejecting the incomprehensible, had been previously employed by ourselves to exhibit the necessity of admitting the incomprehensible:—

Trinitarian Preface, p. xviii.

"Much of the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh, with all the firmament of saving truth and love, whereof it is the radiant centre, must remain inexplicable to our present capacities. But to argue from thence, that this mystery is a cunningly-devised fable, is as illogical as it would be to maintain *that there is no bottom to the sea, because we have no plumb-line with which it may be fathomed.*"

Unitarian Lecture, No. V. p. 9.

"The sense of what we do not know is as essential to our religion, as the impression of what we do know: the thought of the boundless, the incomprehensible, must blend in our mind with the perception of the clear and true; the little knowledge we have must be clung to, as the margin of an invisible immensity; *and all our positive ideas be regarded as the mere float to show the surface of the infinite deep.*"

This is bold misrepresentation; a consistent hardihood in the "tactics of holy war." To persevere, against all remonstrance, in the repetition of a misstatement injurious to an opponent, and to do this so coolly as to use almost his own words in imputing to him the very opposite of what he has said, is at least a convenient, if not an honourable nor yet a formidable policy.

In the same spirit of neither honourable nor yet formidable policy, is the attempt (p. xvii.) to identify Mahometanism and Unitarianism, by the help of a literary forgery, which even if it was authentic, would prove nothing except that the early Unitarians of England, in the reign of Charles the Second, amid the corruptions of Christianity, rejoiced in the testimony borne by Mahometanism to the great doctrine of revealed religion, the Unity of God. It is said that there is, among the MSS. in the Lambeth Library, a "Socinian Epistle (to this effect) to Ameth Ben Ameth, Ambassador from the Emperor of Morocco to Charles II." Leslie, in the Preface to his "Socinian Controversy Discussed," was the first who made use of this supposed letter, and not without the suspicion, that he had first forged it himself.* "I will here," says Leslie, "present the reader with a rarity, which I take to be so, because of the difficulty I had to obtain it." "It is in my mind," says Mr. Aspland, "decisive of the question, that immediately after Leslie had published the Epistle, Emlyn, who answered the tract to which it was prefixed, stated it as his belief, upon inquiry, that no such epistle had ever been presented by any one 'deputed' from the Unitarians, and insinuated

* See "A Plea for Unitarian Dissenters," pp. 88—9, published in 1813, by the Rev. Robert Aspland, from whom we take the exposure of this forgery now brought forth again; for in Trinitarian Controversy falsehood seems immortal, and there is no work for us modern advocates, except to "slay the slain."

that no credit was to be given to a document published by Leslie, unless vouched by some other authority than his own; and that Leslie, in replying to this answer, though he dwells, for pages, upon the passages before and after this, relating to the epistle, says not a syllable about his 'rarity' or in defence of his veracity." "Leslie," continues Mr. Aspland, "is convicted (by Emlyn) of quoting passages from Archbishop Tillotson's Sermons, which had been published in the name of their eminent author, as if they were the work of an avowed 'Socinian.' And if you will consult his reply, you will find this theological braggart completely humbled, and reduced to the necessity of using the wretched plea, that he had omitted the name of the 'great Prelate,' out of *tenderness*.—Is it uncharitable to suspect, under all these circumstances, that he who was proved to have resorted to one trick, might have had recourse to another?"

"As to your 'rarity,'" says Emlyn in his reply to Leslie, "of the address to the *Morocco* ambassador, I see not what it amounts to, more than a complaint of the corruption of the Christian faith, in the article of one God, which the *Mahometans* have kept, by consent of all sides. Yet, forasmuch as I can learn nothing from any *Unitarians* of any such address from them, nor do you produce any subscribers' names,* I conclude no such

* "There is internal evidence of its being written in the way of banter. No subscription appears to it, and no person is named as concerned in it, but a Monsieur Verze, a Frenchman, who might be employed as an *agent*, and yet not be a 'Socinian' agent."—ASPLAND.

address was ever made, by any *deputed* from them, whatever any single person might do. I suppose you conclude from the matter of it, that it must be from some *Unitarian*, and perhaps so; yet you may remember that so you concluded from the matter of Dr. *Tillotson's* Sermons, that they were a *Socinian's*."*

For our own part, when we read this amusing attempt to identify us with Mahometans, by the help of an unknown letter, bearing no subscription, and addressed, by nobody knows whom, to the *Ambassador of Morocco*, in the reign of Charles II., we were forcibly reminded of two passages in Ecclesiastical History, in whose pages all tricks and absurdities can be paralleled, and whose exhibition of gratuitous follies and distortions has left the possibility of "nothing new under the sun," of this description, for our modern days. Hildebrand himself, yes, GREGORY THE SEVENTH, like our poor selves, was suspected of a leaning to "*Islamism*," (*General Preface*, p. xvii.) because he wrote a letter, not to the Ambassador, as in our case, but, as became his greater dignity, to the *Emperor* of Morocco, thanking him for the liberation of some Christian cap-

* Plea for Unitarian Dissenters, p. 137.

"My Lords, if your Lordships attended to the manner in which that quotation is introduced into Leslie, you might see that it bore internal evidence of being something of the nature of a *jeu d'esprit*. . . . . My Lords, this Leslie was a general maligner. . . . . I really think that this is raking into a dunghill to produce this address to the Ambassador of the Emperor of Morocco."—*The Attorney-General before* THE HOUSE OF LORDS *in the Lady Hewley Appeal*, June 28th, 1839.

tives, and expressing his conviction, so much was there of the spirit of God and goodness in this act, "that they both worshipped the same spirit, though the modes of their adoration and faith were different." It also appears that the Emperor Manuel Comnenus exposed himself to the same imputation of "*Islamism*," because he wished to correct an error in the ritual of the Greek Church, which by a laughable misunderstanding of an Arabic word, signifying *eternal*, "contained a standing anathema against the God of Mahomet," as being "*solid* and *spherical*."

"Solventur risu tabulæ; tu missus abibis."

We confess our unmixed astonishment at finding the "thirteen Clergymen" avowing the most undisguised Tritheism. We do not recollect in modern times so bold and unwary an admission of Polytheism as the following: "Our inability, therefore, to explain the Triunity of his Essence, can be no reason for rejecting the revelation of it contained in his Word; even if we were deprived of those shadows and resemblances of this divine truth, which may be seen in the one nature of man, communicating itself to many individuals of the species. *There is one human nature, but many human persons.*" (p. xix.) Is this then the *Unity* of God which the "thirteen" maintain, viz., such a unity as subsists between three individual men? Is it their meaning that the Divine Nature is a Species containing under it three Individuals, as human nature

is a species containing under it as many individuals as there are men? Do they mean to contend, with some of the Fathers, that three men are only "*abusively*" called *three*, being in reality only *one*? What mercy would Dr. Whately have for such unskilful controversialists? Is this however the deliberate view of the whole thirteen, or is it only the rashness of one of them;—for it is very important to have so definite a statement of what is meant by the Trinity in Unity.

VI. It is most incorrectly stated (*Preface*, p. xx.) that "Dr. Priestley, Mr. Lindsey, Mr. Belsham, not to mention earlier writers, have laboured hard to show that the Fathers of the three first centuries were Unitarians, *and believers in the simple humanity of Jesus Christ.*" Such a labour was never undertaken by these writers, nor by any one else. It is capable of proof that the Fathers of the three first centuries were *not* Trinitarian in the Athanasian sense; but that they were believers in the simple *humanity* of the Christ, no one maintains, from the time that Platonism first began to transform Christianity into harmony with its own peculiar ideas. That Unitarians have supported this view by "hardy misquotations," is, to say the least of it, an unwise provocation from men who have in the course of this Controversy been convicted of the most careless misquotations both in their own case (*see especially preface to the Seventh Unitarian Lecture*), and in that of their favourite Champion (*see the Appendix to the Sixth Unitarian Lecture*). That the substantial

statements of Unitarians as to the Unitarianism of the primitive Church have been overturned by Bull, &c., (*Trinitarian preface*, p. xxi.) is a hardy assertion in the face of the following quotations from Bull himself: "In the FIRST and BEST ages, the Churches of Christ directed all their prayers ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES, TO GOD ONLY, *through* the alone mediation of Jesus Christ."—*Answer to a Query of the Bishop of Meaux*, p. 295.

"The Father is rightly styled THE WHOLE, as he is the fountain of divinity: For the divinity which is in the *Son* and in the *Holy Ghost*, is the *Father's*, because it is DERIVED FROM THE FATHER."—*Defence*, sect. ii. 8.

For another quotation from Bishop Bull, see also preface, p. vi., to the Seventh Unitarian Lecture.

VII. The "thirteen Clergymen," finding that Mr. Belsham's "Improved Version" was not a STANDARD with us, and knowing perhaps that in our rejection of it as such we have been borne out by the Unitarian Association at its recent general meeting in London, yet determined to find a standard for us somewhere, have (p. xxvi.) put into our mouths, with marvellous naiveté, an appeal to Mr. Belsham's Translation of St. Paul's Epistles. We have already given up the Mr. Belsham of the Improved Version, and they, for their own easy purposes, represent us as making an appeal to the Mr. Belsham of "the Epistles." We will yield to our reverend opponents whatever consolation they may be able to derive from their *imaginary* triumph, in case

we made this *imaginary* appeal. The Trinitarians cannot divest their minds of the idea that we must have an Authority *somewhere*. They cannot understand what is meant by deferring to principles alone; by having no external Judge of Controversies, no shorter road to conclusions, than to submit every question to the fullest light that Knowledge and Inquiry have provided, or may yet provide. The Cæsar to whom we appeal from Mr. Belsham is not some other Mr. Belsham, or the same man in a different book, but the great principles of Criticism and of Interpretation, as recognized by competent judges of all parties.

VIII. For the faith of the Church of England, the "thirteen Clergymen" declare, that "it is alike their privilege and obligation to contend in that spirit of charity which becomes a believer in Jesus." (*Preface*, p. xxviii.) We shall not open former wounds, but look simply to some of their last manifestations of "Charity," in their General Preface.

1. They say of us (p. xxiii.), that "Unitarians have borne some such proportion to the Christian Church, as monsters bear to the species of which they are unhappy distortions."

2. They "*decline to receive us as brethren, and to give us the right hand of fellowship*," partly because our doctrinal views of Christianity are different from their own, and partly because, as they aver, we maintain our views in *dishonesty*, using language *hypocritically*. We "cannot be Christian brethren," say

they, " for we cannot tread the same road, even for an instant. They use the *language* of Christianity, without believing its *mysteries*. How, then, can we bid them God speed, while they are influenced by this spirit of unfairness? 'The words of their mouth are smoother than butter, but war is in their heart: their words are softer than oil, yet are they drawn swords.'" (pp. xxiv. xxv.)

3. We are charged with deliberately opposing our own minds to the mind of God. " That such unwearied hostility," say they, " is waged by Unitarians *against the mind of God*, as expressed in his word, all their publications unequivocally and mournfully attest." (p. xxv.)

4. They describe us as " blasphemers against the Son of Man," and they close this peculiar exhibition of " Charity" by offering up for us the following prayer :—

" *O merciful God, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor wouldest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted, and live, have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word,*" &c. (p. xxix.)

If such is their " Charity," may we be permitted to ask, what form would their *uncharitableness* take?

Such is the "General Preface," which the "thirteen Clergymen" are deliberately of opinion that the issues of this Controversy, and our mutual relations to each

other, justified them in writing. We confess that we had prepared ourselves for a careful attempt, on their part, at repairing whatever further inquiry, and, we may say without presumption, the close scrutiny of an opponent, had shown to be weak or imperfect in their previous labours,—a last effort to present again the edifice of their faith in what they deemed its most favourable lights, accompanied by a corresponding attempt to shake the foundations of Unitarian Christianity. They have thought themselves, however, sufficiently strong already, to be able to throw away this last opportunity. They deem the work already done, and that they have earned the right, without further addition or defence, to entitle their Lectures "*Unitarianism Confuted.*"

By their own act they entered with us into this Controversy; they repeatedly recognized us during its continuance as the persons whom they were opposing, and whose Theology they had undertaken to refute;—yet our careful and respectful examination of *their* views, and statement of our own, have not been able to win from them one word either of notice or reply. However low their opinion may be of us, as of antagonists beneath their consideration, yet surely in an attack on Unitarianism in Liverpool, we are the persons whose views and influence they had most occasion to correct; and if no more respectful feeling, mere expediency, a regard for their own designs against Unitarianism, would seem to require some examination of

the arguments and doctrines of those who are its Ministers and interpreters in the place, where this attempt at its overthrow has been made.

In abandoning this last occasion of a careful and elaborately strengthened restatement of their case, we confess they have disappointed us. Nor do we believe that even that part of the public which has most sympathies with them, and would most rejoice in their success, will contemplate the omission without surprise.

The origin and history of this Controversy is sufficiently detailed in the annexed Correspondence. It will there be seen how our desire for a really close and decisive examination of the several points at issue between us has been evaded: our reverend opponents would not admit of any controversy of which declamation was not to be the instrument.

We have already stated at the opening of this Controversy, that we did not enter into this discussion for the sake of a Sectarian triumph, but in the more Christian hope of exposing and checking the Sectarian Spirit. To exalt the *spiritual* character of Faith above the verbal and metaphysical,—to unite mankind through their common love and acceptance of Christ's goodness and of Christ's God,—to make his Church one by their participation of one spirit, even the spirit of the life of Jesus,—has been our highest aim, not only on this particular occasion, but throughout all our Ministry. We acknowledge it to be an aim that, indirectly at least, is destructive of "Orthodoxy," that

is, of "the supposed attainableness of Salvation only by one particular set of Opinions,"—for if the love of Christ's God, and the prayerful seeking after Christ's goodness are sufficient to place us on the way of everlasting Safety, then the question is virtually decided, for no man will follow Orthodoxy *gratuitously*. It is necessary to set it forth as the *only* escape from Hell,—else no man would burden himself with it. And thus Orthodoxy is condemned to be damnatory. Intolerance is the very condition of its existence. Cursing is its breath of life. Let it acknowledge that the pure heart, and the pure life, and the spirit of faith in God, may save a soul from death, *and Orthodoxy will have dissolved itself*, for nothing but the last necessity, the attainableness of safety by no other means, could justify its existence. A damnatory Creed must be an *essential* of Salvation; —else it is the greatest impiety possible to conceive. Was it, then, the intention of Jesus to establish a certain *Creed* breathing curses against all who do not *think** alike,—however they may love and live? Alas! why, then, was not that merciful being as distinct as the Athanasian Creed? If Jesus had been charged with the delivery of an exclusive Creed, as the *only* instrument of Salvation, would he have veiled it from the eyes of those he came to save? Need we pursue the argument further? Orthodoxy is *not Christianity*;

* "He therefore that will be saved, must thus *think* of the Trinity." *Athanasian Creed.*

—yet that in Orthodox bosoms the Spirit of Christ may dwell, we are not the persons to deny.

What interest or value can these disputations have for beings whose main business in this world is, in the prospect of a coming world, to conform their souls to the image of the heavenly model, to Jesus the pattern of citizenship in the new Heavens and the new Earth wherein dwelleth righteousness! "Whilst we are wrangling here in the dark," says Baxter, "*we are dying*, and passing to the world that will decide all our Controversies, and the safest passage thither is by peaceable holiness." Whilst we are struggling for points, of which we know little or nothing, hearts are dead or perishing. Whilst we are battling for our conceits, we are all of us unsound within, not right with God, and falling away from the true service of our great master. Whilst proclaiming in Sectarian eagerness, "Lo, Christ is here," and "Lo, Christ is *not* there,"—none of us are sitting at his feet, and submitting our souls and passions to his yoke. Whilst we are falling out by the way, in vain his heavenly invitation is addressed to our unquiet hearts—"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

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BY REV. HENRY GILES.

"And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death. Then said the Lord, Thou hast pity on the gourd for which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night and perished in a night. And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand?"—*Jonah* iv. 9, 10, 11.

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BY REV. JAMES MARTINEAU.

"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."—1 *Pet.* ii. 4, 5.

CORRESPONDENCE

ON THE

TRINITARIAN AND UNITARIAN CONTROVERSY

AT

LIVERPOOL.

To all who call themselves Unitarians in the town and neighbourhood of Liverpool.

"And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, PERSUADING THEM CONCERNING JESUS, both out of the law of Moses and out of the Prophets, from morning till evening."—Acts xxviii, 23.

Men and Brethren,—I am aware that the term "Religious Controversy," is a phrase peculiarly revolting to many minds; that it presents to them nothing in its aspect but that which has been sarcastically called the "*Acetum Theologicum*," a something bitter and distasteful, of more than common offensiveness and asperity. It is for this reason that, in proposing a course of lectures on the subjects in controversy between the Church of England and those who call themselves UNITARIANS, and who, by that very term, seem to impute to the great majority of professing Christians, of almost all denominations, a polytheistic creed, and in requesting your attendance on these lectures, and inviting your most solemn attention to those subjects, I wish, antecedently, to remove

from myself every suspicion of unkindness towards you, and to take away any supposition of unchristian asperity in my feelings, or of a desire to inflict upon the humblest individual amongst you unnecessary pain. That no mere political difference of opinion, much less that any apprehension of danger to the Established Church, have originated this movement, will be sufficiently evident from the fact, that while we are surrounded by many other classes of dissenters, equally opposed to the principle of our establishment, and much more likely to draw away the members of our flocks to their communion, I and my reverend brethren, who are associated with me, on the present occasion, have limited ourselves exclusively to an inquiry into, and an endeavour to expose, the false philosophy and dangerous unsoundness of the UNITARIAN SYSTEM.

Now, what is the cause of this distinction? It is simply this, that while we believe the other dissenting bodies to have arranged an ecclesiastical system, in our judgment not clearly Scriptural, and deficient in those particulars which constitute the *perfection*, though they may not affect the *essence* of a church, we do at the same time acknowledge that they generally hold, as articles of faith, those *great fundamental Gospel truths* which are the substance of the safety of souls; truths which, while so held, give them a part in that gracious covenant in Christ, *within which* God has revealed a way of salvation for all and *out of which* he has not revealed a way of mercy to any. These fundamental truths are the very doctrines which are controverted between *us* and *those* whom we call in courtesy, but not as of right, UNITARIANS: viz., the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the atoning sacrifice, the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit, the fall of our nature, and the gracious renovation of the human soul, through his supernatural operation. Assured as I am that these truths (which, without a desperate mutilation, or an awful tampering with the plain language of the Word of God, it seems impossible to exclude from that divine record) are of the essence of our souls' safety, I ask you, men and brethren, I put it to your consciences, is it not of the nature of the tenderest charity, of the purest love, of the most affectionate sympathy with those in the extreme of peril, and that an *eternal peril*, to supplicate to these doctrines the attention of such as have not yet received them, to pray them to come and "search with us the Scriptures, whether these things be so?"—Acts xvii, 11. Shall he who, unwittingly, totters blindfold on the edge of a precipice, deem it a rude or an uncharitable violence which would snatch him with a strong and a venturous hand, or even it may be with a painful grasp, from the fearful ruin over which he impends? Is it not to your own judgment a strong antecedent ground of presumption, that you are alarmingly and perilously mistaken in this matter, when you see such numbers of highly-gifted and intellectual men, men of study—of general information and of prayer,—holy men, men who "Count not their lives dear unto them," so that they may honour God and preach this gospel, and that not in one particular place, but over the whole surface of the church; who yet account these truths, which you reject, as the essential truths of salvation; truths built, you will remember, in their minds, not on the traditions or authority of men, but on the lively oracles of God?

Seeing, then, men and brethren,

1. That the points of difference between us are of the *very highest possible importance*, and not matters of mere theoretical speculation, as some of your writers have striven vainly to make appear; that, in short, if Unitarians be sound interpreters of Holy Scripture, we Trinitarians are guilty of the most heinous of all sins—*idolatry*; and if, on the other hand, ours be the creed of the apostles, saints, and martyrs, Unitarians are sunk in *the most blasphemous and deadly error*, and are wholly unworthy of being considered *Christians*, in any proper sense of the word. And seeing,

2. That considerable numbers, it is apprehended, especially among the middling and lower classes, who outwardly profess Unitarian principles, are in total ignorance of the unscriptural nature and dangerous character of those principles. And seeing,

3. That the controversial discussion of disputed points was unquestionably the practice of the apostolic and primitive, as well as of all other ages of religious revival, and is calculated as a means, under the good blessing of Almighty God, to "open men's eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light." We invite and beseech you, by the mercies of God in Christ, to come and give us at least a patient hearing, while we endeavour to "persuade you concerning Jesus," and "by all means to win some of you." It is impossible that we can have any base or worldly motive in thus addressing you—any other motive, indeed, besides that which is here avouched, viz., *our solemn impression of the value of souls, and of the peril to which the false philosophy of Unitarianism exposes them*.

Surely it is a sweet and a pleasant thing,—a thing not to divide and sever, but to unite and to gather into the bonds of dearest affection—thus to tell and to hear together of the great things which our God has done for our souls; of His love to us when He, "Who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, did take upon him the form of a servant, and, being found in fashion as a man, did humble himself, and become obedient unto death, even the death of a cross."—Phil. ii, 6—8.

It is the intention of my reverend brethren and myself to meet together on the morning of Tuesday, the 5th of February, (the day immediately preceding the commencement of the course,) for the purpose of solemn humiliation before God, and earnest prayer for the blessing of our Heavenly Father, upon the work in which we are about to engage, that we may be enabled to exhibit and preserve "the mind of Christ," while employed in "contending for the faith," and that we may have great success in our endeavours to be instrumental in enlightening the eyes which we believe to have been blinded "by the god of this world," and causing "the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, WHO IS THE IMAGE OF GOD, to shine unto them."—2 Cor. iv, 4.

And now, men and brethren, humbly and affectionately praying your serious attention to these things, I commend you to the protection and blessing of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. I remain your friend and servant in the gospel, for the Lord's sake,

FIELDING OULD,

Christ Church, Jan. 21, 1839. Minister of Christ Church.

To the Rev. Fielding Ould, and the other Clergymen about to lecture on the Unitarian Controversy in Christ Church.

Reverend Sirs,—A paper has been put into our hands, and an advertisement has appeared in the public journals, containing a "Syllabus of a Course of Lectures on the Controversy between the Protestant Churches and the (so called) Unitarians," &c. As individual inquirers after truth, and disciples of Jesus, we deliberately hold the characteristic doctrines of Unitarian Christianity; and, as ministers among a class of Protestants, who, binding themselves and their pastors by no human creed or interpretation, encourage us to seek for ourselves and expound for them the uncorrupted Gospel, we publicly preach the faith which we privately hold. We feel, therefore, a natural interest in the determination of yourself and brother clergymen to call attention to the Unitarian Controversy, and a desire that the occasion may be made conducive to the promotion of candid research, the diminution of sectarian prejudice, and the diffusion of the true faith, and the spirit of our great Master.

We are not of opinion that a miscellaneous audience, assembled in a place of worship, constitutes the best tribunal to which to submit abstruse theological questions, respecting the canon, the text, the translation of Scripture—questions which cannot be answered by any "defective scholarship." You, however, who hold that mistakes upon these points may forfeit salvation, have consistently appealed to such tribunal; and nothing is left to us but to hope that its decision may be formed after just attention to the evidence. This end can be attained only by popular advocacy on either side, or popular advocacy on both; and, as you have preferred the latter, we shall esteem it a duty to co-operate with you, and contribute our portion of truth and argument towards the correction of public sentiment on the great questions at issue between us. Deeply aware of our human liability to form and to convey false impressions of views and systems from which we dissent, we shall be anxious to pay a calm and respectful attention to your defence of the doctrines of your church. We will give notice of your lectures, as they succeed each other, to our congregations, and exhort them to hear you in the spirit of Christian justice and affection; presuming that, in a like spirit, you will recommend your hearers to listen to such reply as we may think it right to offer. We are not conscious of any fear, any interest, any attachment to system, which should interfere with the sincere fulfilment of *our* part in such an understanding; and, for the performance of *yours*, we rely on your avowed zeal for that Protestantism which boldly confides the interpretation of Scripture to individual judgment, and to that sense of justice which, in Christian minds, is the fruit of cultivation and sound knowledge. As you think it the duty of Unitarians to judge of your doctrines, not from our objections, but from your vindication, you cannot question the duty of Trinitarians to take their impressions of our faith from us, rather than from you.

We rejoice to hear that the Christ Church lectures will be published. Should they issue from the press within a week after delivery, should desire to postpone our reply till we had enjoyed the oppor-

tunity of reading them, persuaded that thus we shall best preserve that calmness and precision of statement, without which, controversial discussions tend rather to the increase of prejudice than the ascertainment of truth. Should the publication be deferred for a longer time, the necessity of treating each subject, while its interest is fresh, will oblige us to forego this advantage; and we shall, in such case, deliver, each week, an evening lecture in answer to that preached in Christ Church on the preceding Wednesday. Permit us to ask, how early an appearance of your printed lectures may be expected; and whether you will recommend your congregations to attend with candour to our replies.

We fear, however, that neither from the pulpit nor the press will your statements and ours obtain access extensively to the same persons; your discourses will, perhaps, obtain readers, too exclusively, among Trinitarians; ours, certainly, among Unitarians. In order to place your views and ours fairly side by side, allow us to propose the following arrangements; that an epitome of each lecture, and another of the reply, furnished by the respective authors, shall appear weekly in the columns of one and the same newspaper; the newspaper being selected, and the length of the communications prescribed, by previous agreement. Or should you be willing, we should prefer making some public journal the vehicle of a discussion altogether independent of the lectures, conducted in the form of a weekly correspondence, and having for its *matter* such topics as the first letter of the series may open for consideration. In this case you will perceive the propriety of conceding to us the commencement of the correspondence, as you have pre-occupied the pulpit controversy; have selected the points of comparison between your idea of Christianity and ours; and introduced among them some subjects to which we do not attach the greatest interest and importance. On this priority, however, we do not insist. You will oblige us by stating whether you assent to this proposal.

While we are willing to hope for a prevailing spirit of equity in this controversy, we are grieved to have to complain of injustice, and of a disregard to the true meaning of words at its very opening. We must protest against the exclusive usurpation of the title "Protestant Churches," by a class of religionists who practically disown the principle of protestantism: who only make the Church (or themselves), instead of the Pope, the arbiter of truth; who hold error (that is, an opinion different from their own,) to be fatal to salvation; and who allow the right of individual judgment only with the penalty of everlasting condemnation upon all whose individual judgment is not the judgment of their Church. We take objection also to the spirit that creeps out in the expression, "(*so called*) *Unitarians*," maintaining that the word does not "impute to others 'a polytheistic creed;'" but that as "Trinitarian" denotes one who worships the Godhead in *three* "persons," *Unitarian* fitly describes one who worships the Godhead in *one* person. And, above all, we protest against the resolution of our case into "dishonest or uncandid criticism;" that is the wilful maintenance of error, knowing it to be such, the Charybdis which one of your lec-

turers proposes for us, if we should be fortunate enough to escape the Scylla of "defective scholarship." We are deeply concerned that so much of the "*acetum theologicum*" has mixed thus early in an invitation, characterized by the chief inviter as "a sweet and pleasant thing;" and this, too, after a public announcement of having purged the mind of every feeling but the pure love of the pure truth.

And to you, reverend sir, in whose letter to the Unitarians of this town and neighbourhood the announcement in question occurs, it is incumbent on us to address a few remarks, with a special view to acquaint you with the feelings awakened by your earnest invitation.

The anxiety which that letter manifests to convince us that, in seeking our conversion, you are actuated by no "base and worldly motive," is, we can assure you, altogether superfluous. Of the purity and disinterestedness of your intention we entertain no doubt; and we regard it with such unaffected respect, as may be due to every suggestion of conscience, however unwise and fanatical. If, with the ecclesiastics and philosophers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, you esteemed the denial of witchcraft as perilous a heresy as Atheism itself, we should feel neither wonder nor anger at the zeal with which you might become apostles of the doctrine of sorcery. Any one who can convince himself that *his* faith, *his* hope, *his* idea of the meaning of Scripture, afford the only cure for the sins and sorrows and dangers of the world, is certainly right in spending his resources and himself in diffusing his own private views. But we are astonished that he can feel himself so lifted up in superiority above other men, as to imagine that Heaven depends on their assimilation to himself,—that, in self-multiplication, in the universal reproduction of his own state of mind, lies the solitary hope of human salvation. We think that, if we were possessed by such a belief, or affections towards men would lose all Christian meekness, our sympath cease to be those of equal with equal, the respectful mercy of a kindr sufferer; and that, however much we might indulge a Pharisaic con passion for the heretic, we should feel no more the Christian "honour" unto "all men."

You ask us, reverend sir, whether it is not "a sweet and pleasant thing," "to tell and hear together of the great things which God has done for our souls." Doubtless, there are conditions under which such communion may be most "sweet and pleasant." When they who hold it *agree in mind* on the high subjects of their conference, it is "sweet and pleasant" to speak mutually of "joys with which no stranger intermeddleth," and to knit together the human affections, with the bands of that heavenly "charity," which, springing from one faith and one hope, is yet greater than them both. Nay, when good men *differ from each other*, it is still "sweet and pleasant" to reason together, and prove all things, and whatsoever things are pure, and true, and lovely, to think on these things, provided that both parties are conscious of their liability to error, and are anxious to learn as well as to teach: that each confides in the integrity, ingenuousness, and ability of the other; that each ap-

himself with reasons to the understanding, not with terrors to the

But such conference is not "sweet and pleasant" where, falli-

bility being confessed on one side, infallibility is assumed on the other; where one has nothing to learn and everything to teach; where the arguments of an equal are propounded as a message of inspiration; where presumed error is treated as unpardonable guilt, and on the fruits of laborious and truth-loving inquiry, terms of reprobation and menaces of everlasting perdition are unscrupulously poured.

You announce your intention to set apart, on our behalf, a day of humiliation and prayer. To supplicate the Eternal Father, as you propose, to turn the heart and faith of others into the likeness of your own may appear to you fitting as an act of prayer; it seems to us extraordinary as an act of humiliation. Permit us to say, that we could join you in that day's prayer, if, instead of assuming before God what doctrines his Spirit should enforce, you would, with us, implore him to have pity on the ignorance of us all; to take us all by the hand and lead us into his truth and love, though it should be by ways most heretical and strange; to wrest us from the dearest reliances and most assured convictions of our hearts, if they hinder our approach to his great realities. A blessed day would that be for the peace, brotherhood, and piety of this Christian community, if the "humiliation" would lead to a recognition of Christian equality, and the "prayer," to a recognition of that spiritual God whose love is moral in its character, spiritual, not doctrinal in its conditions, and who accepts from all his children the spirit and the truth of worship.

We fear that you will consider it as a mark of great obduracy, that we are not more affected by that "purest love" for "those in the extreme of peril," which your letter expresses. Let us again assure you that we by no means doubt the sincerity of that affection. However pure in its source, it is ineffectual in its result, simply because no one can feel his heart softened by a commiseration which he is wholly unconscious of requiring. The pity that feels *with* me is, of all things, the most delicious to the heart; the pity that only feels *for* me, is, perhaps, of all things, the most insulting.

And, if the tenderness of your message does not subdue us, we trust its terrors will prevail still less. We are not ignorant, indeed, that, in dealing with weak minds, whose solicitude for their personal security is greater than their generous faith in truth and God, you enjoy an advantage over us. We avow that we have no alarms whereby to urge men into our Church; that we know of no "terrors of the Lord" by which to "persuade men," except against sin; nor do we esteem ourselves exclusive administrators of any salvation, except that best salvation, which consists in a free mind and emancipated heart; reverencing Christ as the perfect image of the Father, listening to the accents of reason and conscience, as to the breathings of God's spirit, loving all men as his children, and having hope in death, of a transference from this outer court into the interior mansions of His house. For this reason, imbecile souls, without Christian trust and courage, may think it *safer*, at all events, to seek a place within your Church; but we wonder that you can feel satisfied, retaining your Protestantism, to appeal thus to fear and devout policy, rather than to conviction, and that you cannot discern the

mockery of first placing us on the brink of hell and lifting up the veil, and then bidding us stand there, with cool and unembarrassed judgment to inquire. Over converts won by such means, you would surely have as little reason to rejoice as had the priests of Rome to exult on the recantation of Galileo. Our fellow worshippers have learned, we trust, a nobler faith; and will listen to your arguments with more open and tranquil mind than your invitation, had it attained its end of fear, would have allowed. They will hold fast, till they see reason to abandon it, their filial faith in a Divine Father, of whom Jesus, the merciful and just, is *indeed* the image; and who, *therefore*, can have neither curse nor condemnation for "unwitting" error, no delight in self-confident pretensions, no wrath and scorn for any "honest and good heart," which "brings forth its fruit with patience."

To this God of truth and love, commending our high controversy, and all whose welfare it concerns, we remain your fellow-labourers in the Gospel,

JAMES MARTINEAU,
Minister of Paradise-street Chapel.
JOHN HAMILTON THOM,
Minister of Renshaw-street Chapel.
HENRY GILES,
Minister of the Ancient Chapel, Toxteth Park.

Liverpool, Jan. 26, 1839.

To the Reverend James Martineau, J. H. Thom, and Henry Giles.

Gentlemen,—As Christian courtesy seems to require a reply to your address, published in the *Albion* of this day, I hasten to furnish it, though unwilling, for many reasons, to enter into a newspaper discussion with you on the important subjects which just now engage our attention. I shall, therefore, (without intending any disrespect,) pass by unnoticed your critical remarks on certain portions of my recently published invitation to the members of your body to attend and give a patient hearing to the lectures about to be delivered at Christ Church, and confine myself altogether to those points of inquiry to which it is but reasonable that you should receive an answer. And,

1. You ask, whether I will recommend my congregation to attend (I presume, in your respective chapels) to hear the replies which you intend making to our proposed lectures. To this I am compelled to reply in the *negative*. Were I to consent to this proposal, I should thereby admit that we stood on the terms of a *religious equality*, which is, *in limine*, denied. As men, citizens, and subjects, we are doubtless equal, and will also stand on a footing of equality before the bar of final judgment; I therefore use the term "*religious equality*," in order to convey to you the distinction between our relative position as members of the community and as religionists. Being unable (you will excuse my necessary plainness of speech) to recognize you as *Christians*, I cannot consent to meet you in a way which would imply that we occupy the same *religious* level. To *you*, there will be no sacrifice of principle or

compromise of feeling, in entering our churches; to *us*, there would be such a surrender of *both* in entering yours, as would peremptorily prohibit any such engagement.

2. You next inquire how early an appearance of our printed lectures may be expected. In answer to this I have only to say, that arrangements have been made for publishing each lecture as soon after its delivery as may be practicable. Within what time this practicability may be found to coincide, it is of course impossible precisely to determine. It will be obvious, that I cannot answer for my brethren upon this point; but shall only observe for myself, that I should hope a week or ten days will be sufficient for the necessary revisal of proofs, arrangement of authorities, and other business connected with a careful and correct publication.

3. Your third inquiry respects a proposal to have an epitome of each lecture, and its reply, published weekly in the columns of some previously selected newspaper. Not having as yet had the opportunity of collecting the sentiments of my reverend brethren, I can only, as before, give the view which suggests itself to my own mind. I am inclined to think it would be unfair to the respectable bookseller, who has undertaken to publish the course *at his own risk*, to expect him to concur in a proposal which could not but materially injure his sale. As it is our intention to publish each lecture separately, as well as the whole collectively, at the close of their delivery, and that in the cheapest possible form, with a view to the most extensive circulation, I cannot but hope and believe that our united object will be equally, if not better, answered, than by resorting to a process which should necessarily so condense and curtail the matter as to present a very meagre and insufficient exhibition of the arguments, reasonings, references, and authorities, on which so much of the value of the lectures will depend.

4. And, finally, as to your proposal of making some public journal the vehicle of a discussion independent of the lectures, I regret that I feel again obliged to decline pledging myself to concur in it. While I reserve to myself the right of noticing and replying to any communication which may appear, in a duly authenticated form, in any of the public journals, I must at the same time express my conviction, that a newspaper is not the most desirable medium for disquisition on the deep and awful subjects which must pass under review in a controversy like that in which we are about to engage. The ordinary class of newspaper readers, including too frequently the ignorant scoffer, the sceptical, and the profane, is not precisely that whose attention we desire to solicit to our high inquiry into the laws of Scriptural Exegesis, and our application of these laws to the elucidation of the profound mysteries of the Book of Revelation. I feel no doubt that all who feel interested on the subject, will contrive to hear or read what we shall preach and publish; and will thus be furnished with more solid and suitable materials for forming a correct judgment, than could be afforded by the casual study of the ephemeral pages of the public press.

Having thus distinctly replied to the several points of your letter, on which you may have reasonably expected to hear from me; and trusting

that you will not attribute to any want of respect to you the omission of all notice of the remainder; and congratulating you with all sincerity on your avowed intention of coming, with your respective congregations, to hear the exposition which we are about to give of what we believe to be *fatally false* in your system, as contrasted with what we think *savingly true* in our own; and praying with all fervency, to the great Head of the Church, to bless and prosper the effort about to be made for the promotion of his glory, through the instruction of those who are "ignorant and out of the way,"

I remain, Gentlemen,

Yours for the Lord's sake,

FIELDING OULD.

January 28, 1839.

To the Rev. James Martineau, J. H. Thom, and Henry Giles.

Gentlemen,—I owe it to you and to myself to state, that no offence was intended, either by me, or, as I conscientiously believe, by my clerical brethren, in the title of the subject to which my name stands affixed in the Syllabus of the Lectures on the Unitarian Controversy. I am also bound to acknowledge, that your letter, on the subject of the lecture, is written in a style of calmness and courtesy, of which, I trust, you will have no reason to complain of the absence in the statements which I shall have to submit to your attention. Of course, this is not the time for the vindication of the view which I adopt on the great question; I content myself, therefore, with this public disclaimer of any desire to substitute irritating language for sound argument.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Yours, with all due respect,

THOS. BYRTH.

To the Reverend Fielding Ould.

Rev. Sir,—We beg to offer you our thanks for your prompt and distinct reply, in the *Liverpool Courier* of yesterday, to the proposals submitted to you in our letter of Monday. We are as little anxious as yourself for the prolongation of this preliminary newspaper correspondence; and however much we may regret the negative character of your answers to our questions, we should have reserved all comment upon them for notice elsewhere, if you did not appear to us to have left still open to consideration the proposed discussion (independent of the lectures) through the press. That the pulpit controversy should be on *unequal terms*, is, we perceive, a matter of conscience with you; but your objections to a newspaper controversy seem to arise, not from any desire to withhold your readers from our writings, as you would your hearers from our preaching, but from the unfitness of a political journal to be the vehicle of religious argument. Permit us, then, to say, that we have no preference for this particular *medium* of discussion; that we are wholly indifferent as to its *form*, provided the substantial end be gained of *bringing your arguments and ours before the attention of the same par-*

ties, and that *any* plan which you may suggest, affording promise of the attainment of this end, whether it be the *joint* publication of the lectures in your church and those in our chapels, or the appearance in the pages of a religious journal (either already established, or called into existence for the occasion, and limited to this single object), will receive our welcome acceptance.

Had we any desire to see a theological opponent in the wrong, we should leave the case between us in its present position, and should not persevere thus in opening the way towards a fair adjudication of it; but our reverence for the religion of which you are a representative and symbol before the world, transcends all paltry controversial feelings, and we should see, with grave sorrow, the honour of Christianity compromised by the rejection, on the part of its authorized ministers, of the acknowledged principles of argumentative justice. You will not, we trust, incur the reproach of inviting a discussion *with* us, and then changing it into an indictment *against* us. *You* have originated the appeal to the great tribunal of public opinion in this Christian community; *you* are plaintiff in this controversy; you will not, we feel assured, so trifle, in things most sacred, with the rules of evidence, as to insist that your case shall be heard in one court, and before one jury, while your defendant's case is banished to another, and the verdict pronounced without balancing the attestation and comparing the pleadings. Should you, moreover, succeed in convincing your readers, that this is a discussion not (as we submit) between church and church, but (as you contend) between Christianity and No-Christianity, the effect will be yet more to be deplored, for, in such case, Christianity will appear to claim from its votaries the advantage of an exclusive hearing for itself, and, while challenging, by the very act of controversy, the appeal to argument, to leave, for those who are stigmatized as unbelievers, the honour of demanding that open field which, usually, truth is found to seek, and falsehood to avoid. We trust that you will not thus inflict a wound on a religion which, in all its forms, we deeply venerate.

You deny our *religious equality* with *you*. Is it as a matter of *opinion*, or as a matter of *certainty*, that such equality is denied? If it is only as an opinion, then this will not absolve you from fair and equal discussion on the grounds of such opinion. If it is with you not an *opinion*, but a *certainty*, then, Sir, this is Popery. Popery we can understand, —we know, at least, what it is,—but Protestantism erecting itself into Romish infallibility, yet still claiming to be Protestantism, is to us a sad and humiliating spectacle, showing what deep roots Roman Catholicism has in the weaker parts of our common nature.

We confess ourselves at a loss to comprehend your distinction between *civil* equality and *religious* equality. We claim equally as fellow-*men*, as partakers of a common *nature*; of that nature the religious elements are to us incomparably dearer and more elevating than the elements that make us merely citizens; and the equality that is conceded in regard to all our lower attributes, but denied in regard to those that are spiritual and immortal, is such an equality as you might concede to the brutes, on the ground of their animal nature, without injury to the

maintenance of your religious superiority. What is meant by our equality at the bar of final judgment, as citizens, but not as religionists, we do not know; or, if we can detect a meaning in it, it is one which we should have supposed belonged to our faith rather than to yours.

In reference to your repugnance to enter our chapels we say no more, reserving our right of future appeal in this matter to those members of your church who may be unable to see the force of your distinction between religious and social equality. But we are surprised that you should conceive it so easy a thing for us to enter your churches: and should suppose it "no sacrifice of principle and compromise of feeling" in us to unite in a worship which you assure us, must constitute in our eyes "the most heinous of all sins—Idolatry." *Either* you must have known that we did *not* consider your worship to be idolatry, *or* have regarded our resort to it as a most guilty "compromise of feeling;" to which nevertheless, you gave us a solemn invitation; adding now, on our compliance, a congratulation no less singular.

We thought you had been aware, that, while our services must be, in a religious view, *painfully deficient* to you, those of your church are *positively revolting* to us. Still as our presence, on such passing occasions as the present, does not, in our opinion, involve any "sacrifice of principle," we shall set the example to our friends of attending; not making our desire that they should be just dependant on the willingness of others to be so too. And we shall have this satisfaction, that, whether you "win" them, or whether we retain them, the result will be a faith held, not on the precarious tenure of ignorance or submission, but in the security of intelligent conviction, and the peace of a just and enlightened conscience.

We remain, reverend Sir,
Yours, with Christian regard,

JAMES MARTINEAU.
JOHN HAMILTON THOM.
HENRY GILES.

Liverpool, January 31st 1839.

To the Trinitarians of this Town and Neighbourhood who may feel interested in the approaching Unitarian Controversy.

Christian Brethren,—A letter of public invitation has been addressed to the Unitarians of this town and neighbourhood, by the Rev. Fielding Ould, on behalf of himself and twelve other clergymen associated with him, urging us, with the earnestness of Christian anxiety, to bend our minds to their expositions of our errors and our dangers. We naturally interpreted this to be an invitation to discuss the most momentous questions as equal with equal. We thought, indeed, that we saw an assumption of superiority, if not of infallibility, perhaps inseparable from minds so trained: still we supposed, that this superiority was to be maintained by argument and fair discussion: and this was all that we desired. It never occurred to us, that the reverend gentleman might possibly expect us to accept him as a divinely appointed judge of truth, whose teachings

were to be received in submission and silence; or that he could suppose that convictions like ours, convictions that have resisted all the persuasions of worldly ease and interest, that have removed from us the charities and sympathies of men like him, and held in simple fidelity to truth and God, could be so lightly shaken that nothing more was required to blow them away than a course of *ex parte* lectures without answer or discussion. If the object had been to confirm Trinitarians in their views, this kind of proceeding we should have understood; but surely some thing more was required when Unitarians were publicly invited to the controversy. Much less could we anticipate that the reverend gentleman, holding himself to be upon a "religious level" far above us, to belong to a different order of spirits, could yet be so far removed from the Christian and Apostolical spirit as to refuse to bring his "light" into direct conflict with our "darkness." With these expectations of controversy, and having no bonds with anything but truth, we unfeignedly rejoiced, that, for the first time in this community, both sides of the great question were about to appear together before the solemn tribunal of public attention.

In all these things we have been quickly undeceived. In our simplicity, we believed that discussion was really invited and desired. We now find that we were invited to hear, but not to argue; that to lecture us is of the nature of "dearest affection;" but that to hear what we may have to urge in reply would be to "recognize us" as "*Christians*," to admit that we stood on the terms of a *religious equality*, which is, *in limine*, denied. We now find that all reciprocity is refused to us; that it never was intended to treat us as equals; that the method of discussing the Unitarian controversy, about to be adopted, is to hear only the Trinitarian advocates—to call us around the Christ Church pulpit to be taught to listen and believe. Clergymen may be so blinded by ecclesiastical feelings as not to perceive the extreme offensiveness of all that is assumed in this mode of treating their fellow men; but we turn to you, the freer laity of the Church, in generous confidence, that such conduct will not be found to accord with your spirit of justice—with the nobler ideas which *you* have gathered, from the intercourse of life, of equitable dealing between man and man.

We proposed to the clergymen about to lecture at Christ Church, that since they had appealed to public opinion, through a popular advocacy, the pleadings should be on both sides, and, as far as possible, before the same parties. This is refused to us, because we are not Christians. Is this in the spirit of the Saviour? It is also refused to us, because it is asserted, that Trinitarians cannot enter our places of worship without a sacrifice of principle, whilst we may enter their's without pain or compromise. Now the very opposite of this, though not the truth, would have been nearer to it. In our worship there would be the inoffensive absence of some views dear to you: in your worship there would be the actual presence of some views most painful to us. In our worship, you would hear addressed that Great Spirit whom you, too, adore to seek: in your worship, we should hear addressed, as God, him whom we revere and follow, as the image of God, the man Christ Jesus. In

our worship, you would find deficiencies only; in yours, we should find what, to us, is positively objectionable, religion materialized and the Deity distributed into persons. The Rev. Fielding Ould, in one of his letters, represents us as looking upon you to be Polytheists, which we do not; and, in another of his letters, tells us, that we may enter your temples without pain or compromise of feeling. It will be evident to you, Trinitarian laymen, that the Lecturers at Christ Church cannot retire, upon such reasoning as this, from the full, public, and impartial discussion which we propose to them, without making it manifest to the public, that they are *determined* upon doing so.

We proposed to them discussion through the press, as well as from the pulpit: and this also is denied to us, on the ground, that newspapers are read by the sceptical, the scoffing, and the profane. Now not in newspapers alone, *but in any journal whatever*, was the controversy offered by us; yet we could not but have anticipated the objection, when we recollect the use made of the newspapers by the religious party to which the reverend gentlemen belong. Again have we tendered discussion, through the press, in any form whatever, with the single condition, that the views of both parties shall be presented to the same readers—in the hope, not as yet gratified, of an answer in a juster spirit.

Nothing now remains for us but to appeal from ecclesiastics to minds more generally influenced, to minds that, taught in the great schools of humanity, have learned mutual respect, and that have dropt, in the free and noble intercourses of man with man, the monkish and cloistered sentiment of spiritual as of civil superiority. To you, then, the Trinitarian laity, we make our appeal; from the exclusiveness and assumed infallibility of clergymen, to men who, from familiarity with wider influences, have formed different conceptions of Christian brotherhood and of Christian justice. We should not have held ourselves authorized in thus addressing you had we supposed, that your cause or yourselves, your ideas of justice had been worthily supported by your ecclesiastical representatives, who, we firmly believe you will agree with us in feeling, have openly betrayed both you and it.

We appeal to you, not without confidence, to give us that equal audience which your clergymen have refused; that those of you who, through interest in the great question, are led to hear the Trinitarian statements, will, in the love of the truth, and in the spirit of equitable inquiry, hear also the Unitarian replies. We seek not to make you Unitarians: that, at least, is not our chief desire and aim. But would to God that we could do something to spread that true Christianity which holds the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and deems charity dearer and more heavenly than doctrinal faith! Would to God that this controversy might have some effect, not in building up any one creed, or swelling any one sect, but in destroying the delusive and separating ideas that lie at the roots of creeds, and are the nourishers of bigotry, uncharitableness, and heresies! We should deserve well of this great community, if we could remove from it this cause of strife and bitterness,—if we could exhibit the God of Jesus requiring from us, not speculative opinions, but the heart, the temper, and the life of Christ!—if we could expose the unchristian idea of men preparing themselves for a moral heaven by a

metaphysical creed, and unite those who now consume their energies, their temper, and their time, in contending for abstruse and uncertain dogmas in the deeds of mercy and of brotherhood which flow out of our common Christianity, and which, in the wide wastes of sin, of ignorance, and of misery that surround us, are the moral debts of man to man, and consitute the religion which, before God, even our Father, is pure and undefiled.

Respectfully directing your attention to our advertisement of a syllabus of Lectures on the Unitarian Controversy, presenting both sides of the question—our portion of which will be delivered in Paradise Street Chapel, on successive Tuesdays,

We are, Christian brethren,

Yours, in the spirit of Christian brotherhood,

JOHN HAMILTON THOM.
HENRY GILES.
JAMES MARTINEAU.

Liverpool, Feb. 2, 1839.

TRINITARIAN LECTURE,

ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS IN CHRIST CHURCH.

1839.— February 6.
1. Introductory. The practical importance of the Controversy with Unitarians. *Rev. F. Ould.*

February 13.
2. The Integrity of the Canon of Holy Scripture maintained against Unitarian Objections. *Rev. Dr. Tattershall.*

February 20.
3. The Unitarian Interpretation of the New Testament based upon defective Scholarship, or on dishonest or uncandid Criticism. *Rev. T. Byrth.*

February 27.
4. The proper Humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Rev. J. Jones.*

March 6.
5. The proper Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ proved from Prophecies, Types, and Jewish Ordinances. *Rev. J. H. Stewart.*

March 13.
6. The proper Deity of our Lord the only ground of Consistency in the Work of Redemption. *Rev. H. M'Neile.*

March 20.
7. The Doctrine of the Trinity proved as a consequence from the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Rev. D. James.*

March 27.
8. The Atonement indispensable to the Necessities of Fallen Man, and shown to stand or fall with the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Rev. R. P. Buddicom.*

UNITARIAN LECTURE,

ON TUESDAY EVENINGS IN PARADISE-STREET CHAPEL.

1839.—February 12.
1. The practical importance of the Unitarian Controversy. *Rev. J. H. Thom.*

February 19.
2. The Bible; what it is, and what it is not. *Rev. J. Martineau.*

February 26.
3. Christianity not the property of Critics and Scholars, but the gift of God to all men. *Rev. J. H. Thom.*

March 5.
4. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus." *Rev. H. Giles.*

March 12.
5. The proposition 'That Christ is God,' proved to be false from the Jewish and the Christian Scriptures. *Rev. J. Martineau.*

March 19.
6. The scheme of Vicarious Redemption inconsistent with itself, and with the Christian idea of Salvation. *Rev. J. Martineau.*

March 26.
7. The unscriptural Origin and Ecclesiastical History of the Doctrine of the Trinity. *Rev. J. H. Thom.*

April 2.
8. Man, the Image of God. *Rev. H. Giles.*

April 3.
9. The Deity, Personality, and Operations of the Holy Ghost. *Rev. J. E. Bates.*

April 10.
10. The Sacraments practically rejected by Unitarians. *Rev. H. W. M'Grath.*

April 17.
11. The Nicene and Athanasian Creeds explained and defended. *Rev. R. Davies.*

April 24.
12. The Personality and Agency of Satan. *Rev. H. Stowell.*

May 1.
13. The Eternity of future Rewards and Punishments. *Rev. W. Dalton.*

April 9.
9. The Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, who dwelleth in us, and teacheth all things. *Rev. J. M. Thom.*

April 16.
10. Christianity without Priest, and without Ritual. *Rev. J. Martineau.*

April 23.
11. Creeds the foes of Heavenly Faith; the allies of worldly Policy. *Rev. H. Giles.*

April 30.
12. The Christian view of Moral Evil here. *Rev. J. Martineau.*

May 7.
13. The Christian view of Retribution hereafter. *Rev. H. Giles.*

To the (so-called) Unitarians of Liverpool.

Men and Brethren,—Before the commencement of the lectures, on which I have taken the liberty of inviting your attendance, I am anxious respectfully to address to you a few observations in reference to the letters which have appeared in the public journals under the signature of your ministers.

It would appear that these gentlemen have been desirous to produce upon the public mind an unfavourable impression, *à priori*, of my reverend brethren, and of myself in particular, because of our having declined, on their proposal, to enter upon a course different from that which we had originally contemplated. "You will not, we trust," say Messrs. Martineau, Thom, and Giles, "incur the reproach of inviting a discussion *with us*, and then changing it into an indictment *against us*." Now, we never invited any discussion with these gentlemen; if we had, we should have addressed ourselves to them personally. But, while we would not, and do not, shrink from any discussion with them into which we can consistently enter, we cannot allow ourselves to be diverted from the pursuit of our original purpose, *viz.*, to deliver a course of lectures upon the various points of Unitarian doctrine, which we believe, and think we can prove, to be not only *unscriptural*, but *fatal to the souls* of those who embrace them, and which cannot be maintained (as appears from the published works of the most learned Unitarians) without a virtual surrender of the inspiration of the Bible. Believing, as I do, that your best interests for time and for eternity are involved in the momentous questions at issue—questions affecting the very vitality of true religion—I inserted a letter in the daily prints, expressed, as I had hoped, in terms of courtesy and affection, inviting your presence and soliciting your attention. I also caused a notice to be published of our intention to print the lectures, separately and in a collective form, for extensive and immediate circulation, so that the amplest opportunity *might be afforded* for replying to our arguments on the part of any who

might feel disposed to the task. That is, we proposed to employ the instrumentality of the *pulpit* and the *press*, (an instrumentality, be it observed, *equally at the service of those who differed from us*,) in order to promote the best interests of a portion of our countrymen, whom we believe to be "perishing for lack of knowledge."

Where is there to be found here aught of *arrogance*, or *uncharitableness*, or "*assumed infallibility*"? Where is there aught of unfairness, or "any rejection on our parts of the acknowledged principles of argumentative justice?" It is true we refuse to advise our respective congregations to attend at Unitarian chapels, to hear such answers as your ministers may think it right to offer in refutation of our reasonings. Our principles and our consciences alike forbid our concurrence in such a proposal. We cannot go ourselves, nor recommend our people to go and have their ears wounded, their hearts pained, and their Christian sensibilities shocked, by the iteration of such, in our view, blasphemous statements, as we find spread in painful profusion over the pages of Unitarian theology. And why, then, it is asked, do we invite or expect your attendance upon what are called "the painfully revolting" services of our church? For this reason, that, as appears from the works of all their principal writers, Unitarians do not attach the same importance to religious doctrines and opinion that we do. It seems to be with them a matter of comparative indifference what dogmas a man holds, provided he be *sincere* in his profession; while with us sincerity is no criterion of truth, being persuaded that as a man's *religious opinions* are, so will his *conduct* be in time, and his *destiny* through eternity. Being of opinion, then, that our people would suffer by being brought into contact with error, in the same way that the human body would be endangered by accepting an invitation to feed at a table where poison was mingled with bread, we feel obliged to decline recommending the proposed arrangement to their adoption. But, feeling that there would be neither danger nor risk to those who are represented as having a moral appetite for poison as well as bread, and as looking upon all theological opinions if not as equally harmless in their bearing on their eternal interests, we ventured to invite you to come, that we might "persuade you concerning Jesus." If there be any of you whose conscience revolts against a participation in Trinitarian worship, we invite not his attendance: we would be not intentionally accessory to the wounding of the weakest conscience among you.

You will thus, men and brethren, perceive what was intended by the assertion that our "*religious level*" was different. We meant not to arrogate to ourselves any undue superiority, but simply to state a fact. And while we think it both *unreasonable and unjust* that we should be expected to become the auditors of what we deem blasphemous error, or pledge ourselves to the joint circulation of what we call truth and falsehood, and thus be "partakers of other men's sins,"—we cannot but be of opinion that there is some ground for these charges in reference to the conduct of those who, on this ground, attempt to prejudice the public mind against us, as if we were declining a battle which we had invited and provoked.

We are convinced that the attempt will not succeed. The public will have eyes to see with sufficient clearness the real merits of the case, and will condemn the efforts made to blind its vision, or at least incline it to take a distorted view of our relative position.

Again repeating my invitation to all who can conscientiously accept it, to attend our lectures, and leaving cheerfully to others the free use of the only weapons we employ—the BIBLE—the PULPIT—and the PRESS—and praying the Lord to guide all his inquiring people, by the teaching of his Holy Spirit, into all truth, even the "truth as it is in Jesus," I remain, men and brethren, yours in the bonds of love,

FIELDING OULD.

Christ Church, Feb. 5, 1839.

To the Rev. J. Martineau, J. H. Thom, and Henry Giles.

Gentlemen,—Having hitherto corresponded with you on my own individual responsibility, I have to request that you will consider me as *alone* answerable for what has hitherto appeared under my signature. I had this morning, for the first time, the opportunity of personal conference with my reverend brethren collectively at the expected meeting which took place at my house. I have now to address you upon the result.

All that we had originally contemplated was, the delivery of a course of lectures upon the principal doctrines in controversy between Unitarians and ourselves. It now appears that my invitation to the Unitarian laity to come and hear us, while we brought their avowed principles to the test of the Word of God, has been taken advantage of by you, and led to a series of proposals on your part, which I took upon myself to decline. I have this day addressed a letter to the members of your body generally, which I trust will have the effect of setting that part of the subject in its proper point of view.

It is, however, indispensable to distinguish carefully between this *particular invitation* of yours, and *discussion* generally. Your letter to the Trinitarian laity invites discussion in any shape which shall effectually bring the statements of both parties before the same individuals. We are now prepared to gratify your desire, and WE ACCEPT YOUR INVITATION. Our lectures, however, shall be first delivered; on this we are determined. THEN, in the name of, and in dependence upon, our blessed Lord and Master, three of our body will be ready to meet you three before a public audience in this town; all preliminaries to be, of course, arranged by mutual conference. We propose, if you please, to take the three great subjects into which the controversy obviously divides itself, *viz.*,

1. EVIDENCE of the genuineness, authenticity, and inspiration of those parts of our authorized version of the Holy Scriptures which you deny.

2. TRANSLATION of those parts which you alter, and in our judgment *misrepresent.*

3. THEOLOGY, involving those principles of vicarious sacrifice which we deem vital, and which you discard.

Our proposal, then, is to meet you either *one day* on each subject, as you please; or *one week* on each subject, as you please: the discussion to be conducted in speeches of *one hour* or *half an hour* each, as you please.

And now, trusting that this proposed arrangement may prove satisfactory to *you*, and to all who take an interest in this controversy, and fervently praying the great Head of the Church to overrule our purposes to the advancement of His kingdom and the promotion of His glory,

I remain, Gentlemen,

Yours for the Lord's sake,

FIELDING OULD.

February 5, 1839.

To the Reverend Fielding Ould.

Reverend Sir,—It would have been gratifying to us to receive from you an answer to our offer of a discussion, through the press, before being called upon to consider a proposal, altogether new, for a platform controversy.

You give us an invitation to *talk*, and call this an acceptance of our offer to *write*. The two proposals are so distinct, that it is not easy to see how the one could be transformed into the other; nor is the mistake explained on turning to the words of our invitation, appealed to by you, and contained in our letter to the Trinitarian laity. They are these:—"We have tendered discussion *through the press*, in any form whatever, with the single condition that the statements of both parties shall be presented to the same *readers*." You leave the impression, that an oral debate is comprised within the terms of this offer; but, in doing so, you widen its scope, by striking out the phrases which restrict it to *printing and publication*, and describe it thus; "Your letter to the Trinitarian laity invites discussion *in any shape* which shall effectually bring the statements of both parties before the same *individuals*." You will at once perceive the misrepresentation; will acknowledge that the idea of settling historical and philological controversies, by popular debate, has neither origin nor sanction from us;—and will permit us to recal you to our first proposal of discussion through the press,—a proposal to which, though now made for the third time, we have yet received no answer.

Meanwhile, we will not delay the reply which is due to this new suggestion of a platform controversy. We decline it altogether; and for this answer you must have been prepared, by the sentiment we expressed in an early stage of this correspondence: "We are not of opinion that a miscellaneous audience, assembled in a place of worship, constitutes the best tribunal to which to submit abstruse theological questions respecting the canon, the text, the translation of Scripture,—questions which cannot be answered by any defective scholarship." To assemble a similar audience in an amphitheatre, where the sanctities of worship

are not present to calm and solemnize the mind, is evidently not to improve the tribunal. The scholar knows that such exhibitions are a mockery of critical theology; the devout, that they are an injury to personal religion. We are surprised that any serious and cultivated man can think so lightly of the vast contents of the questions on which we differ, as to be able to dispense with calm reflection on the evidence adduced, and to answer off-hand all possible arguments against him, within the range of biblical and ecclesiastical literature. We are not accustomed to treat your system with such contempt, however trivial an achievement it may seem to you to subvert ours. In reverence for truth, in a spirit of caution inseparable from our desire to discharge our trust with circumspect fidelity, and from a belief that, to think deeply, is the needful pre-requisite to speaking boldly, we offered you the most responsible method of discussion, in which we might present to each other, and fix ineffaceably before the world, the fruits of thought and study. To this offer we adhere; but cannot join you, on an occasion thus solemn, in an appeal to the least temperate of all tribunals. We recollect that one of the clergymen associated with you refused an oral discussion of the Roman Catholic controversy. We approved of his decision; and, in like circumstances, adopt it.

Will you allow us to correct a mistake which appears in your enumeration of the three topics most fit for discussion? We do not, as Unitarians, deny the genuineness, or alter the translation, of any part of the authorized version of the holy Scriptures. The Unitarians have neither canon nor version of their own, different from those recognized by other churches. As biblical critics, we do indeed, neither more nor less than others, exercise the best judgment we can on texts of doubtful authority, (as did Bishop Marsh, in rejecting the "heavenly witnesses," 1 John v. 7,) and on the accuracy of translations (as did Archbishop Newcome, when he published his version of the New Testament); but no opinions on these matters belong to us *as a class*, or are needful to the defence of our theology. If you allude to the Improved Version, we would state, that it contains the private criticism of one or two individuals; that it has never been used in our churches, nor even much referred to in our studies, and is utterly devoid of all authority with us; and that, for ourselves, we greatly prefer, for general fidelity as well as beauty, the authorized translation, which we always employ.

In your letter to the Unitarians, published in the *Courier* of Wednesday, you state that you never invited discussion with us (the ministers) personally. We never imagined or affirmed that you did. But surely you invited discussion with the class of persons called Unitarians; and as a class has no voice except through its representatives, and no discussion can take place without two parties, you cannot think that we are departing from our proper sphere in answering to your call. Did you not invite us (the Unitarians) to you, "to tell and hear together the great things which God has done for our souls?" And did this mean that all the "*telling*" was to be on one side, and all the "*hearing*" on *the other? Did* you not press upon our admiration the primitive practice *of "controversial* discussion of disputed points?" And did this

mean that there was to be neither "*controversy*," "*discussion*," nor "*dispute*," but *authoritative teaching* on one side, and *obedient listening* on the other? In one of two relations you must conceive yourself to stand to us;—that of a superior, who *instructs* with superhuman authority, or that of an equal, who "*discusses*" with human and fallible reasonings. Between these two conditions, there is *no third;* nor can you, with justice, take sometimes the one and sometimes the other, according as the occasion may require the language of dignity or that of meekness. We certainly addressed you as an equal, and did not pay you the disrespect of imagining that your invitation to "discussion" meant nothing at all.

We are sorry that you ascribe to us any intention to divert you from your contemplated course of lectures. Be assured nothing could be further from our design. We simply desired that, having *invited us*, you should have *recognized us when we presented ourselves*, as parties in the "discussion."

We remain, Reverend Sir,
Yours, with Christian regard,
HENRY GILES.
JOHN HAMILTON THOM.
JAMES MARTINEAU.

Liverpool, February 7th.

To the Revs. J. Martineau, J. H. Thom, and H. Giles.

Gentlemen,—I think it due to the cause of truth, as well as to the interest awakened in the public mind by this controversy, to address to you a few observations on your last letter, as published in the *Mercury* of Friday. Though still strongly of opinion that the columns of a newspaper present a most undesirable medium of communication upon subjects such as those we are now engaged in discussing, I am unwilling in the absence of any other accessible instrumentality, to lose the opportunity it affords of impressing upon the attention of all reflecting men the actual position which we relatively occupy.

1.—Being aware of the sincere anxiety which you have already manifested for "discussion in any shape which should bring the statements on both sides before the same parties," it is not without considerable surprise that I perceive that you "decline altogether" my proposal of a "platform controversy." Now, while you say I invited you to "*talk*," and I answer I invited you to *argue*, I cannot but think it will appear evident to most, that by the subsequent publication, in an authentic form, of our oral debate, you would have gained all that you could have desired in the assistance of the press, while a select auditory, equally composed of the respective friends of both parties, would have been able to judge of your ability, not intellectually, but morally, to meet the case we could have made out against your system. I cannot but hope that a secret consciousness of the weakness of your cause has prompted your determination, and am of opinion that while a discerning public will approve the discretion of your resolve, they will not be slow to ap-

preciate its motive, or the precise measure of your zeal for a candid and impartial hearing.

But the "settling of historical and philological controversies by popular debate has neither origin nor sanction from you." Perhaps not: but you cannot say that such a course is altogether without precedent. You have doubtless heard of the protracted debate upon these same controversies which were held in the north of Ireland a few years ago between Mr. Bagot and Mr. Porter. May I ask whether it was the *result* of that discussion that induced you to withhold your sanction from all future controversies so conducted? Mr. Porter did not consider it inconsistent with the principles of Unitarianism to debate his creed before "a miscellaneous audience." Are you wiser than he in your generation? Again:—the proposed tribunal is not the best "to which to submit abstruse theological questions respecting the *canon*, the *text*, the translation of scripture." But do you not apprise us a little lower down, that you, as Unitarians, do *not deny the genuineness, or alter the translation of any* part of the authorized version of the holy scriptures? Why, then, there is no ground for the above apprehension. As these are not points which the tribunal will have to try, why question its competence on their account? You are surprised that I would "dispense with calm reflection on the evidence adduced." I am, in my turn, surprised that you should suppose I have any such intention. When the "evidence adduced" has been taken down and published, what is there to prevent its being "calmly" weighed and estimated at its proper value? And then it is hard "to answer off hand all possible arguments" advanced. So it is; but not harder for *you* than for *us*. Here at least we should stand on a footing of *perfect equality*. It was hardly to be expected that *you* should object to this.

2.—I now come to the *mistake* into which you say I have fallen, and which you offer, obligingly, to correct. "We do not, as Unitarians, deny the *genuineness* or *alter the translation* of any part of the authorized version of the holy scriptures. The Unitarians have neither canon nor version of their own different from those recognised by other churches." If this be true I certainly have been mistaken; but have the satisfaction of knowing that this mistake has been shared by a host of abler critics and more learned scholars than I can pretend to be. I had always thought that I had read of the liberties taken with the received text by the Priestleys and Belshams—the Wakefields and Channings, when they were of opinion that they spoke too strongly the language of Trinitarians. I had also understood that the Bruces, the Drummonds, and the Armstrongs of Ireland had performed achievements in the same line, at which many not a little wondered. I had further imagined that the unanswered —because unanswerable—volumes of Archbishop Magee presented evidence on this behalf, with which few were unacquainted. Now, if you mean to say that you, the ministers and representatives of Liverpool Unitarianism have never "questioned the genuineness, nor altered the translation of any part of the authorized version," I can understand the assertion, and willingly take your own word for its truth. But if you mean to affirm that this has not been done, and to a very prodigious extent, by

Unitarians, both domestic and foreign, you will excuse me if I positively deny the allegation, as being totally without foundation, and I refer in proof to the notorious lucubrations of the above-named doctors of Unitarian divinity, as well as to the severe exposures of their semi-infidel tampering with the Bible which they have called forth.

But while you do not "deny the genuineness or alter the translation of any part," perhaps you question the *inspiration* of certain portions of the sacred volume. You will remember that this was *one* of the branches of *evidence* that we proposed to discuss with you, and that not the least in importance. Why are you silent on this head? Is it not of any moment, think ye, to admit the *genuineness* and confess the *authenticity* of a book or a chapter or a verse of scripture, if you withhold your conviction of its *inspiration*? Is it not a fact that you might hold the *genuineness* of the two first chapters of St. Matthew and St. Luke, and feel no disposition to alter the *translation* of a word, and, at the same time, boldly deny that they were "given by inspiration of God?" If I am mistaken here too, I pray to be set right. If not, then the public will decide upon the candour and fairness of your profession to remove the necessity of any controversy with you on the score of EVIDENCE, because of your admission of the *genuineness*, and your satisfaction with the *accuracy* of the authorized version, while by an expressive but momentous silence, you acknowledge that *the greatest of testimonial questions* is by you disputed, and you at the same time refuse to come forward boldly, and debate it fairly before the church.

Again—"Unitarians have neither canon nor version of their own different from those recognised by," &c. You anticipate here a reference to "the improved version," and tell us that "it contains only the private criticism of one or two individuals—that it has never been used in your churches, and is utterly devoid of all authority with you." Will you excuse me for expressing my doubts of the accuracy of this statement, for these reasons:—1. That work was the joint production of some of the ablest men and best scholars that the Unitarian sect has ever been able to boast of; and that the shades of Belsham, Lindsey, Jebb, Priestley, Wakefield, &c.,* might well be astonished to hear their learned labours so contemptuously spoken of by three modern disciples of their school. 2. That, in the year 1819, (the date of the edition which I possess,) the improved version had gone through no fewer than *five editions*—a tolerable criterion of the extent of its circulation in little more than twenty years. How many it may have passed through since, I have been as yet unable to ascertain. 3. That so far from its being "devoid of all authority," it professes, in the title page, to have been "published by the Unitarian Society for promoting Christian Knowledge and the practice of virtue by the distribution of Books." That it may "never have been used in your churches" I can well believe, as it is probable that the feelings of your people would have revolted too strongly against its introduction, to make the experiment advisable: the food which it furnishes may have proved too coarse even for the digestive

* See "Improved Version," note on 1 John, i. 1.

organs of popular Unitarianism itself. It is also possible that the modern professors of your theology may be somewhat ashamed of this awful specimen of "rational and liberal criticism," and may secretly wish that it had never seen the light. But the *existence* of it, at least, cannot be denied; and there it stands, a painful memorial and a living witness, of what is "in the heart" of a system that exalts *reason* into a dominion over *revelation*, and that, unwarned by the solemn admonitions contained in the book itself against the presumptuous additions or detractions of human pride or folly, has dared sacrilegiously to lay its unhallowed hands on the sacred ark, and to attempt the mutilation and misrepresentation of the great magna charta of the spiritual liberties of man.

3.—At the close of your letter, you say, "Surely you invited discussion, with the class of persons called Unitarians." I again repeat I did not. I determined to have a course of lectures delivered in my church on the points at issue between us and the professors of what we call your "heresy." And I invited the persons whom I was and am sincerely anxious to benefit, to come and hear our well-considered convictions of their errors and their consequent danger, as well as our faithful exhibitions of what we think "a more excellent way." It will not be denied that a clergyman of any denomination, in a free country, and more especially a clergyman of the national church, has a right to preach, or authorize others to preach, in his pulpit, according to his own discretion, and invite whom he pleases to come and hear, without its being understood that he challenges either the parties so invited, or their representatives, to enter with him the lists of controversial discussion. I absolutely protest against any such understanding. I did not seek to *compel* the attendance of any of your body, nor yet to deny to you or them, in reply, the use of the same weapons that I had employed in the attack. I *did* mean that those who pleased should come and hear us "*tell*" them a gospel which they were not *told* by those upon whom we looked as "blind leaders of the blind;" and that they should be prepared to "learn" whatever should commend itself to their consciences, under our teaching, as the truth of God. We did not, and do not, expect to be able to bring demonstration home to the hearts of any by the strength of our arguments, or by the force of our appeals; but we anticipated that, in answer to our earnest prayers, the power of the Holy Ghost would accompany our teaching of His truth, and make it effectual to the conversion of souls "from darkness to light." We propose to stand before the congregations that might assemble, neither as "superiors to instruct with superhuman authority," nor as "equals to discuss (if you mean by that *dispute*) with human and fallible reasonings;" but simply as "ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech them by us, that we might pray them in Christ's stead—be ye reconciled to God."* This is the middle position in which we stand, the *mean* between your *two extremes*; and by God's blessing, we will continue to occupy it, until we shall have delivered our consciences, and discharged our duty to a numerous, respectable, but, in our judgment, blinded and deluded class of our fellow-countrymen.

* 2 Cor. v. 20.

And now, gentlemen, having taken such notice of certain allegations in your letter as it seemed impossible to pass by, and with the full purpose of continuing in the course on which I have entered, until, through the blessing of God, the grand object which I have proposed to myself shall have been accomplished,

I remain, yours, for the truth's sake,

FIELDING OULD.

February 11, 1839.

To the Revs. J. Martineau, J. H. Thom, and H. Giles.

Gentlemen,—You state, in your letter of the 7th ult., that "your proposal of discussion through the press, though made for the third time, has as yet received no answer." It was thought by ourselves and our clerical brethren, that as our lectures were to be printed and published, every facility was afforded you of replying to them through the same channel, and that thus the whole subject would be fairly brought before the public.

In addition to this, we have offered to meet you in oral discussion; you decline the proposal.

Anxiously desirous to bring the whole matter before this great community, so as to prove that we not only entertain no apprehensions as to the result, but are convinced that, by such an exposition, great good will be effected, we, the undersigned, on our own responsibility, ACCEPT YOUR TERMS of discussing the momentous question between us, in the form of a correspondence in some public journal or periodical, altogether independent of the lectures.

We remain, gentlemen,

Yours, for the sake of the gospel,

THOMAS BYRTH.
FIELDING OULD.
HUGH M'NEILE.

February 11, 1839.

To the Rev. Fielding Ould.

Rev. Sir,—The tone of your last letter makes us rejoice that, by the acceptance on your parts of discussion through the press, this correspondence may now be brought to a close.

Let us, Rev. Sir, place before you your own language, and ask, in solemn sadness, are the feelings it betrays worthy of the occasion, or deserved by us, or edifying to the public mind? These are your words:—"I cannot but hope that a secret consciousness of the weakness of your cause has prompted your determination, and am of opinion, that while a discerning public will approve the discretion of your resolve, they will not be slow to appreciate its motive, or the precise measure of your zeal for a candid and impartial hearing." Sir, it is not a little mournful to find a Christian Minister expressing his hope that other men are hypocrites,—that they are secretly conscious of the weakness of the cause which they publicly defend. To *hope* that we secretly

know our errors, whilst publicly preaching them as truths, is, indeed, strange preference of faith before works. Let us assure you, Sir, that if we could think of you as this language shows you think of us, we should decline all discussion with you,—we should regard you as an opponent too discreditable to be identified with a great question, or to be considered as an honourable representative of your own party.

We apprehend, Rev. Sir, that nobody but yourself would think of attributing to conscious weakness our preference of the most perfect and searching method of discussion, to the most flimsy, insufficient, and unscholarlike that could by possibility be selected. Had we wished to catch the ear of a popular assembly, or to turn away attention from weak points by oratorical artifices, we should have proposed this platform controversy, instead of, as we did, carefully and purposely wording our invitation and our enumeration of the modes in which the controversy might be conducted, so as to exclude the idea of oral discussion.

We observe with sorrow, and with diminished hope of benefit from controversy, that you can so sink the interests of truth in personal championship, as to meet our solemn unwillingness to entrust the gravest questions to extempore dexterity and accidental recollection, with the reply that in this respect we should be at least *equally* situated. Doubtless, Sir, if a display of personal prowess was our object, this would be conclusive; but TRUTH is our object, and we dare not offer it such worthless advocacy.

With respect to the instance alluded to by us, of a decision similar to our own, our impression had been that reasons also similar to our own were given at the time; and we can only regret, since this impression seems to be false, that we quoted the case.

With regard to the "Improved Version," we shall only say here, that it has been raised to an importance in this discussion which is entirely factitious. The differences between us must be settled upon principles of interpretation and criticism recognized by all scholars; and if these principles can be shown, in any respects, to condemn the "Improved Version," in those respects we shall be the first to abandon it, feeling ourselves to be in nothing bound by it. When we said that, as *Unitarians*, we had no canon or version of our own, we meant that we are quite willing to accept the text as fixed by scholars, most of them Trinitarians, on critical principles. We most cheerfully recognize the fundamental principles of Scriptural inquiry, so clearly and soundly stated yesterday evening by Dr. Tattershall; and although agreeing with many of your ablest scholars, in thinking the received translation to require corrections, and not approving of the morality of taking up a position in defence of truth unnecessarily unfavourable; yet, were our only object to display the ampler and superior Scriptural evidence for Unitarianism than for Trinitarianism, the received translation would be quite sufficient for our purpose.

Again reminding you that the word "discussion" was introduced *into your original invitation*, which contained also reference to the con-

troversial practice of primitive times, and set forth the advantages of "hearing" and "telling" together,

We remain,

Your fellow-labourers and fellow-Christians,

JAMES MARTINEAU.
JOHN HAMILTON THOM.
HENRY GILES.

Feb. 14, 1839.

To the Revs. Thomas Byrth, Fielding Ould, and Hugh M'Neile.

Gentlemen,—Your willingness to discuss the Unitarian and Trinitarian controversy in the most satisfactory mode, has given us sincere pleasure; and if we have seemed to press this matter upon your acceptance, we assure you it was with the single desire that the statements of both views, in their most accurate and perfect forms, might be presented to the same minds through an unbiassing medium; an object which could be obtained neither by the unequal distribution of separate lectures, nor by means so necessarily imperfect as oral discussion.

We shall be happy to arrange with you, at the earliest possible period, the manner and conditions of our proposed discussion.

We shall be ready to conform ourselves to your wishes upon the subject; but we would suggest the desirableness of the discussion being entered on at once,—partly because attention to it might now be secured, and partly because in the seriousness and number of our mutual engagements, this controversy should not be allowed to interfere with our other duties and responsibilities longer than is necessary.

We are, Gentlemen,

Yours, with respect,

JOHN HAMILTON THOM.
JAMES MARTINEAU.
HENRY GILES.

Feb. 14, 1839.

To the Revs. J. Martineau, J. H. Thom, and H. Giles.

Gentlemen,—I cannot permit our correspondence to terminate without a few remarks on your letter, as published in the *Mercury* of Friday last.

1. I regret that the "tone" of my last address should have given you any offence, while I am wholly unconscious of any intention unnecessarily to wound the feelings of those who, I am free to admit, have hitherto written at least courteously, if not very candidly, upon the subjects which have been recently submitted to the attention of the public. Allow me distinctly to disclaim any attempt to charge you with *hypocrisy*, or make it appear that you "secretly know as errors what you publicly preach as truths." I took occasion merely to express my surprise that persons who seemed so anxious for an impartial hearing of their defence, should "altogether decline" a proposal by which, as it appeared, and still appears to me, that object might have been so satisfactorily attained; and in the exercise of a charity that "hopeth all things," I sought to attribute

your refusal to a latent and half-formed conviction within you, that your principles, in whatsoever sincerity entertained and professed, might not bear the light of such an investigation as that to which they would have been subjected in a public *vivâ voce* discussion. Where is there any charge of hypocrisy here? May not a man be perfectly sincere in the maintenance of an opinion, which he would nevertheless be very unwilling to defend in oral debate, from a proper apprehension of the force of argument with which it might be encountered, and a secret consciousness of his own slender materials for its support? Be assured it is not necessary for us to brand you with *hypocrisy*, in order to convict you of *heresy*. We are willing to give you every credit for honesty of intention and integrity of purpose, while we cannot but suspect that you are fully aware of the difficulty of maintaining the principles of Unitarianism on the ground of an unmutilated and "unimproved" Bible.

Were I equally disposed with you to take offence, I too might inquire, "in solemn sadness, whether it be deserved by us, or edifying to the public mind," that you should more than insinuate, though of course in very polished phrases, that "we have proposed a platform controversy, in order to catch the ear of a popular assembly, and to turn away attention from weak points by oratorical artifices." Is this your opinion of us? If we thought so, "we should decline all discussion with you as opponents too discreditable to be identified with a great question, or to be considered as honourable representatives of your own party." But *we* are not offended. We look upon your language as simply intended to convey an admission that your system is unpopular; one that, from its cold, and cheerless, and unimpassioned character, would seek in vain to enlist on its behalf any measure of popular sympathy, or conciliate any favour unless from those whom it had imbued with its own proud spirit, and accustomed to the low temperature of its own frigid zone.

2.—But, gentlemen, while I cheerfully receive the admonition on the "tone" of my address which your letter *does* contain, I have to complain respecting the answer to a very simple question I had proposed, which your letter *does not* contain. As I am unwilling to incur the hazard of again offending, I will forbear from more than hinting at the semblance of rhetorical dexterity that appears in your perhaps undesigned turning away of attention from the PRINCIPAL POINT which I had submitted for your consideration, in order to fasten upon me a groundless charge, and so challenge public sympathy in your favour, as men branded with the character of hypocrites, and secretly cognisant of errors which were openly preached as truths. We proposed to discuss with you "the evidence of the genuineness, authenticity, and *inspiration* of the holy scriptures." You replied that you do not "deny the *genuineness*," and seek not "to alter the *translation* of any part of the authorised version," which you prefer to the abandoned version of Mr. Belsham and his associates. You were silent, however, about the INSPIRATION. I ventured to inquire whether I was mistaken in supposing you denied *the plenary inspiration* of the authorised version? My words were, "If I am mistaken *here too*, I pray to be set right." In your letter now before me *there is not a word* upon the subject; no answer to my all-important

inquiry. There is a little further disparagement of the "improved version," which, we are told, has been raised into a "factitious importance in this controversy;" you will be the first to "abandon it," if it should be condemned by the ordinary principles of critical interpretation—so far so good. But what of the INSPIRATION? Are you either afraid or ashamed to speak out what you think on this subject? I would not that you should be offended at the "tone" of my interrogations; but again I must ask, what are your opinions upon the *quality* and *extent* of scripture inspiration? The public are anxiously expecting an answer to this solemn query, and our present correspondence cannot close until it is answered. The way will then be clear for our approaching discussion through the press; we shall then understand each other, and shall have reconnoitred and appreciated the character of the field upon which we are to take up our respective positions. You say that "*truth* is your object," and not "personal championship." Well then, let us have *the truth* upon Unitarian views of SCRIPTURAL INSPIRATION. All other argument can be only an unmeaning play of words until this point is settled.

We are rejoiced to learn that you are satisfied with "the authorized version," and "the received translation," for the purposes of our present inquiry; and when you shall satisfy us that you admit the full inspiration of *all and every part* of that volume, we shall be in a condition to inquire whether it presents "ampler and superior Scriptural evidence for Unitarianism than for Trinitarianism." We remember that Mr. Belsham, in his Review of Mr. Wilberforce's Treatise, has said, speaking of the texts usually quoted by Trinitarians in proof of the proper deity of Christ, that "Unitarians pledge themselves to show that they are *all* either *interpolated, corrupted,* or *misunderstood.*"—Review, pp. 270, 272. They engage to get clearly rid of them altogether. *You,* it would appear, have given up the *interpolations* and *corruptions*; the *misunderstandings,* we presume, still remain chargeable against us; but whether on the ground of *ignorance,* or of mistaken confidence in the *inspiration* of the texts in question, we have yet to be informed.

You will pardon my anxiety for an answer upon this head, bearing in mind that we regard it as opening wide a door for the introduction of *infidelity,* so to give up *any portion* of the sacred volume as being not of inspired authority, as to render it doubtful whether *any portion* does possess that authority, and thus entirely neutralize the effect of God's message of mercy to the minds and hearts of men.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Yours, for the sake of the Gospel,

FIELDING OULD.

February 18, 1839.

To the Rev. Fielding Ould.

Reverend Sir,—You proposed (in your letter of the 5th February) a certain series of subjects as proper topics for the discussion between us, and submitted the list to our notice for acceptance or rejection. From this enumeration we struck out two particulars, *viz.,* the *authenticity* of

certain parts of the New Testament writings, on the ground that we did not deny your postulates under that head; and the *translation* of certain other parts of the Scriptures, on the grounds that, with yourself, we prefer, on the whole, the authorized version to all others; that we would not be responsible for any new rendering proposed in the Improved Version; and that, as we have nothing so absurd as a *system of translation* capable of *systematic* treatment, any special instances, in which we may think the common translation inaccurate, had better be discussed in connection with the theological doctrines affected by the texts in question.

These subjects being excluded from the list, the rest, comprising the question of *inspiration*, and the *doctrines of your theology*, of course stand over for discussion. We said nothing of these, because we had no exception to take against them. As our *notice* of the others was to effect their removal, our "silence" about these was to *secure their admission*.

The plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, or, if you really prefer it, (as your phraseology seems to imply,) "the plenary inspiration of the *authorized version*" remains then as an essential part of our approaching controversy. Why you should complain that we do not step aside with you individually, to render you an account of our belief in this matter, we cannot divine, unless you think that, by tempting us into your confessional by appeals to our conscience, you could impose upon the "heretics" your penance at discretion. If it should be, that this subject is likely to be committed to your hands in this controversy, and you are merely anxious to know betimes what precisely are the positions which you may be called upon to meet, a private communication of your wish would be sufficient. The second lecture of our series will be speedily published, and will furnish the information which you desire.

We are sorry that you discover any want of "candour" in our last letter; and surprised that, this being the case, you can esteem it "courteous." We regard a violation of "candour" as the greatest outrage upon "courtesy;" and despise, above all things, the hollow and superficial manners, which are empty of all guileless affections and Christian sentiments. In saying that you charged us with hypocrisy, we committed no breach of candour, but only the mistake, which we are now happy to correct, of supposing that your language faithfully represented your meaning. That you did not think of the *word* "hypocrite" when you wrote to us, we cheerfully believe; but that you thought of us as doing that which makes a hypocrite, your own explanation renders more evident than it was before. You attribute to us "a latent and half-formed conviction," that "our principles might not bear the light of investigation," and "a consciousness" of "the difficulty of maintaining them." Now there can be no "difficulty," where the tribunal is wisely chosen, in maintaining any set of opinions, except from the superior force of the antagonist considerations; there can be no "consciousness" of such "difficulty," except from consciousness of this opposing superiority;—to be conscious of a preponderant evidence in favour of any *system, is at* heart to believe it; and he who believes one system, and *publicly upholds another, is*, as we interpret the word, *a hypocrite*. We

perceive, however, that you made this charge without precisely meaning it; and we think no more of it.

We disclaim any intention of hinting that you "proposed a platform controversy, in order to catch the ear of a popular assembly, and to turn away attention from weak points by oratorical artifices." We simply affirmed, that oral discussion would have afforded a better refuge for our imputed "weakness" than the press. But surely it does not follow that, because the consciously weak might prefer such a method, therefore all who prefer it must be consciously weak. It would, indeed, be a strange mistake of all the symptoms by which the characters of men can be known, if we attributed to you any suspicion that you could be mistaken. You are quite aware that your earnestness appears to us perfectly sincere, and even to transgress the bounds of a modest confidence.

We remain, Reverend Sir,

Yours, with Christian regard,

HENRY GILES.
JOHN HAMILTON THOM.
JAMES MARTINEAU.

February 21, 1839.

To the Rev. J. Martineau, J. H. Thom, and H. Giles.

Gentlemen,—Before we proceed with our proposed discussion, it is necessary to determine, with a little more of accuracy than has been hitherto stated, what our controversy is to be about.

We thought that you, in common with Unitarians generally, acknowledged the Scriptures of the New Testament, as contained in what is commonly called "The Unitarian or Improved Version," to be inspired of God, and consequently of infallible truth.

This however you, as individuals, have disclaimed; and, therefore, we are compelled to ask *what you do* acknowledge INSPIRED REVELATION?

Is our discussion to be,

1. Upon the meaning of a mutually-acknowledged standard of truth? Or,

2. Upon the question, Is there any such standard? And if so, what is it?

We affirm the inspiration by God of the Holy Scriptures, as contained in our authorized canon, and are willing to refer every question for decision to their ascertained meaning.

Do you agree in this?

Our standard being known, it is a matter of obvious fairness that we should ask to have yours stated.

Either you admit the divine inspiration, and consequent infallible truth, of the Bible, or you do not.

Or, you so admit a part, and reject a part. You will be so good as to state clearly how this matter stands.

Are you believers in a WRITTEN and INFALLIBLY-ACCURATE REVELATION from God to man?

If so, *what is* that Revelation?

If you admit only *parts* of our Bible as inspired, you will oblige us by stating *what parts*.

The character of the discussion must obviously depend upon this:—is it to be a discussion upon EVIDENCE or upon INTERPRETATION? It would be manifestly a waste of time in us to enter upon the interpretation of what you might afterwards get rid of, (so far, at least, as you are concerned,) by declaring it only the opinion of a *fallible man*.

We remain, Gentlemen,

Yours, for the sake of truth,

HUGH M'NEILE.
FIELDING OULD.
THOMAS BYRTH.

March 4th, 1839.

To the Rev. H. M'Neile, F. Ould, and T. Byrth.

Gentlemen,—You ask us, Is our discussion to be,

1. "Upon the meaning of a mutually-acknowledged standard of TRUTH?" Or,

2. "Upon the question, Is there any such standard? And, if so, what is it?"

We answer, distinctly, that our controversy is upon the meaning, ascertained by INTERPRETATION, of the *Hebrew* and *Greek* Scriptures. Should any questions of criticism arise respecting what is the text to be interpreted, these must, of course, be argued separately, upon purely *critical* grounds.

We conceive that the real controversy between us respects the nature of Christianity itself;—you holding the Revelation to consist in doctrines deducible from the written words; we holding the Revelation to be expressed in the character and person of Jesus Christ, and to be conveyed to us through a faithful and authentic record. Which of these two ideas is Scriptural?—that is our controversy.

Of course, "the standard" by which we must test "the truth" of these ideas is the New Testament, and the Hebrew Scriptures, so far as they throw light on its contents. Whichever view of Christianity is supported by the *meaning* of this standard, is the true one. The method of ascertaining the meaning of any writings is the same, whether those writings are of natural or of supernatural origin; so that the process of interpretation may go on, undisturbed by any reference to the theory of verbal inspiration. The admission of an "infallible truth" in the Bible (which, however, is known with *certainty* only to God; for you, after admitting it, are disputing with heretics of your own communion what it is,) cannot alter, in any respect, the true grounds of our controversy. It is a controversy of interpretation, and no theory of verbal inspiration can make it anything else.

This theory, however, we conceive to be altogether fallacious, both *in its principles and in its* results; and if you wish to make it the sub-

ject of our controversy, we have no objection. We leave it to your choice, whether we are to discuss the theory of verbal inspiration, or whether we are to discuss the meaning of the original Scriptures, as ascertained by the acknowledged principles of interpretation.

We confess to not a little surprise that three clergymen, coming forward to discuss Unitarianism, should be found to express themselves so inaccurately, or from such defective information, as to speak of "the Unitarian or Improved Version," and to represent the work, thus falsely described, as acknowledged by Unitarians generally to contain the New Testament as inspired by God. The theory of verbal inspiration, which we deny altogether, we are not likely to claim in favour of a Unitarian translator. We have repeatedly stated, that the "Improved Version" is not the "Unitarian Version;" nor is it "commonly" so "called." And now we say, once more, that our controversy is not about the Improved Version, but about the Greek Testament.

When you accepted our invitation, with its terms, it was understood that all the preliminaries of our controversy were to be arranged by mutual agreement. You were aware, and we have in our letters distinctly stated, that the theory of verbal inspiration stood as a part of that controversy; you knew, also, that in a few days a distinct statement of our opinions upon the nature of the Bible, in the form of a printed lecture, would be before the public. We therefore look upon your letter, in the *Courier* of Wednesday last, as altogether unnecessary; and we answer, thus publicly, what ought to have been matter of private communication, only because we are resolved not to allow any informalities, on your parts, to prevent our coming to a public discussion of our respective views of Christianity.

We are, Gentlemen,

Yours respectfully,

JAMES MARTINEAU.
JOHN H. THOM.
HENRY GILES.

March 11, 1839.

To the Rev. J. Martineau, J. H. Thom, and H. Giles.

Gentlemen,—In our last letter we gave up the "Improved Version," so far as you, *as individuals*, are concerned, because, *as individuals*, you disclaimed it. We are surprised, therefore, that you should revert to it, and the more so, because you have now ventured to say, not only that *you* disclaim it, but also, in the face of known facts, that it is not "the Unitarian version," nor is it "commonly so called." When you disclaimed it *for yourselves*, we did not demur. But when you go on to disclaim it *for the Unitarian body*, (for which, by the way, you have no authority,) we strenuously deny your assertion, and call in evidence the language of all the best writers upon the controversy.

You have misstated our question. We did *not* ask, "Is our discussion to be upon the meaning of a mutually-acknowledged standard of *Scripture?*" *We did ask*, "*Is it* to be upon the meaning of a mutually-

acknowledged standard of *truth*?" We receive the Scripture as a *standard of truth*. The substitution of the one word for the other, in this question, has mystified your whole letter.

We collect, however, from your letter, and from Mr. Martineau's sermon, to which you refer us, (and which we consequently conclude contains the sentiments of you all,)

1. That you do not believe in a *written and infallibly-accurate Revelation* from God to man.

2. That Paul the apostle may have "*reasoned inaccurately*," and "*speculated falsely*." *

3. And that, consequently, you feel yourselves at liberty to judge his statements (and all the statements of Scripture) as you do those of any other books.

You seem to think that this is of little consequence, and say that "the process of interpretation may go on, undisturbed by any reference to the theory of verbal inspiration."

We reply that such a process can lead to nothing but waste of time. For when we shall have proved some great truth, or condemned some fatal error, upon the authority of Paul, or some other inspired writer, you have kept an open door for yourselves to escape from the whole force of our demonstration, by saying that, in the words on which we rely, the sacred writers "*reasoned inaccurately*," or "*speculated falsely*,"—while, if any passages in those writers *seem* to favour your views, you have adroitly retained the privilege of ascribing to them a sort of inspiration.†

No, gentlemen, we are not to be deceived so, into an attempt to fix the cameleon's colour. If the apostles may "reason inaccurately," and "speculate falsely," if the inspiration under which they wrote did not infallibly preserve them from error, then there is no standard of truth upon earth. Of what avail is it, then, to refer to the *Greek* Testament, or the *Hebrew* Scriptures? The Scripture, instead of being (what David called it, speaking as he was moved by the Holy Ghost) "a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path," degenerates into a mixture of light and darkness, which we dare not implicitly follow, but of which we must judge by some superior light in ourselves.

We observe, further, that, according to the light that is in you, historical proof of miracles having been wrought in attestation of what the writers of Scripture say, would NOT be proof against inaccuracy in their reasonings, or falsehood in their speculations.

* *To grant that Paul reasons, and be startled at the idea that he may reason incorrectly —to admit that he speculates, and yet be shocked at the surmise that he may speculate falsely*,—to praise his skill in illustration, yet shrink in horror when something less apposite is pointed out,—*is an obvious inconsistency*. The human understanding cannot perform its functions without taking its share of the chances of error; nor can a critic of its productions have any perception of their truth and excellence, without conceding the possibility of fallacies and faults. We must give up our admiration of the apostles as men, if we are to listen to them always as oracles of God.—*Martineau's Sermon*, pp. 34, 35.

† *I believe St. Matthew* to have been *inspired*; but I do not believe him to have *been infallible.—Sermon*, p. 27.

This notable conclusion you come to, by elevating nature into the miraculous, and thus depressing the miraculous into the natural; since you say that the whole force of the impression made by proofs from miracles arises from a "SUPPOSED *contrast*" between miracle and nature.*

You have thus advanced a step beyond common Deism, and rendered yourselves inaccessible even by miracles. This is conclusive, and demands the serious attention of all who have hitherto been disposed to receive instruction from you. We confess that we can go no further; for, if there be only a *supposed contrast* between miracles and nature, we cannot prove the attesting interposition of God on behalf of the statements of Scripture, and must give up as worthless the appeal which Jesus makes to his miracles, in answer to the inquiry of John's disciples: "*Go,*" said he, "*and show John again those things which ye do see and hear; the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them.*"—Luke vii, 22. Upon your principles, gentlemen, this appeal is worthless; for even if the wonderful things here stated be established as historical facts, still they contain no proof, because between these wonders and the course of nature there is only "a *supposed* contrast."

Thus then, by your avowal, that even miracles cannot prove inspiration, you are left in undisputed possession of the field of infidelity. We have no common property of reason with you, and without determining whether men who reject the evidence of miracles are of an order of beings above or below ourselves, we feel that discussion with them is impracticable.

While, therefore, we shall continue to use all lawful methods of argument and persuasion, in the hope of being useful to those who, though called Unitarians, are not so entirely separated from our common humanity as you seem to be, we have no hesitation in saying that, with regard to *yourselves* as individuals, there appears to be a more insurmountable obstacle in the way of discussion than would be offered by ignorance of one another's language; because the want of a common medium of language could be supplied by an interpreter, but the want of a common medium of reason cannot be supplied at all.

We remain, gentlemen, yours respectfully,

HUGH M'NEILE.
FIELDING OULD.
THOMAS BYRTH.

March 18th, 1839.

To the Revs. H. M'Neile, F. Ould, and T. Byrth.

Gentlemen,—We regret the misstatement of your question, which appeared at the commencement of our letter of the 13th instant. We regret still more that it did not occur to you to attribute it to its real

* All peculiar *consecration* of miracle is obtained by a precisely proportioned *desecration* of nature; it is out of a supposed contrast between the two, that the whole force of the impression *arises.—Sermon, p. 24.*

cause,—the carelessness of a printer or transcriber. In the autograph manuscript which remains in our hands, your question is correctly stated thus—" Is our discussion to be upon a mutually acknowledged standard *of truth* ?" How the word " truth" became changed into " scripture," we cannot tell; and not having read our letter after it was in print, we were unaware of the mistake until you pointed it out. Whatever " mystification" it introduced, you will consider as now removed.

Your letter announces your retirement from the promised controversy. Knowing that in taking this step you could not put yourselves in the right, it is only natural perhaps that you should resolve to set your opponents in the wrong, and to cover your own retreat by throwing scorn on their religious character. Theology appears in this instance to have borrowed a hint from the " laws of honour;" and as in the world a " passage of arms" is sometimes evaded, under the pretence that the antagonist is too little *of a gentleman*, so in the church a polemical collision may be declined, because the opponent is *too little of a believer*.

You refuse to fulfil your pledge to the public and ourselves on two grounds:—

I. Because we do not acknowledge the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures.

II. Because we think it impossible to infer from miracles the mental infallibility of the performer. It is of no use, you say, to argue about divine truth with those who do not believe in " a written and infallibly accurate revelation from God to man."

We will concede, for the moment, and under protest, your narrow meaning of the words " inspiration" and " revelation;" and without disturbing your usage of them, we submit that the reasons advanced by you afford not even a plausible pretext for having violated your pledge. First, as to the plea that we are put out of the controversy by our unexpected denial of the intellectual infallibility of the sacred writers; and that to argue about the meaning of the Bible is a waste of time, till its verbal inspiration is established. We reply,—

I. That it was you yourselves who started this very question of inspiration for argument between us. In his letter of February 18th, Mr. Ould gives this account of our projected controversy: " We proposed to discuss with you the EVIDENCE of the genuineness, authenticity, and INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES;" he taunts us with *reluctance* to take up this " greatest of testimonial questions," with " refusing to come forward boldly, and *debate it fairly before the church*." * We *have* come forward boldly, and this is now the alleged reason why there is to be *no debate at all before the church*. Moreover, at the time when you said " we accept your terms," you regarded us as holding the very opinions which are now made the excuse for a retreat; in your first lecture they are made a chief ground of indictment against us, and pages are crowded with citations from Unitarian writers, expressing those same sentiments, which, when avowed by your own opponents, are to make them unfit to be addressed, and to exempt you from the duty of reply.

* Rev. F. Ould's Letter of February 11.

Of the spirit of this proceeding, observers of honourable mind must judge; they, as well as you, are well aware, that to pronounce men unworthy of attack, is itself an attack of the last degree of bitterness.

II. Your refusal to settle with us the meaning of Scripture till the plenary inspiration is acknowledged, is in plain contradiction to your own principles. You fix the imputation of *deception* on our statement, that "the process of interpretation may go on undisturbed by any reference to the theory of verbal inspiration." Yet is this only a repetition of what Mr. Byrth himself says, "In whatever light the Christian Scriptures are regarded, whether as the result of plenary inspiration, as we Trinitarians believe, or as the uninspired productions of the first teachers of Christianity, or even as the forgeries of imposture, *the meaning* of their contents is a *question apart from all others.*"*

Dr. Tattershall, in common with all sound divines, makes it the *first step* of scriptural inquiry to "examine the contents" of the books under the guidance of the following principle: that "any message coming from God must be consistent with the character of the same holy being, as exhibited in his works," and must have "consistency with itself:" † and he justly states, that whether we ought to take the *last step*, of admitting the divine authority of the doctrines, must still be contingent on those doctrines, "being themselves wise and holy,"—"lessons worthy of God."‡ These principles are violated, unless our investigation into your doctrines is taken in the following order:—

I. Are your doctrines *true to the sense of Scripture?* If *not*, the controversy ends here; if they *are*, then,

II. Are they *self-consistent; reconcileable with the teachings of God's works, pure and holy?* If *not*, the controversy ends *here;* if they *are*, then,

III. Do they come to us, clothed with divine authority, and conveyed in the language of plenary inspiration?

Your system, then, must establish its *existence in the Bible* (which is a matter of interpretation), and its *credibility in itself* (which we presume there must be *some criterion* to determine), *before* the question of inspiration is capable of being discussed. We deny both these preliminaries; protesting that we cannot find your system in the Scriptures; and that if we could, it appears to us so far from "self-consistent," "wise and holy," and "worthy of God," as exceedingly to embarrass the claims to divine authority, of any writings which contain it. It was then in implicit obedience to your own rules that we proposed to let the question of interpretation take the lead; and no less so, that we presume to form a judgment respecting the internal character of doctrines professing to be scriptural. Permit us to ask how, but by some "light in ourselves,"

* Rev. T. Byrth's Lecture, Part I, p. 114.

† Rev. Dr. Tattershall's Lecture on the Integrity of the Canon, p. 69.

‡ "Whatever lessons of instruction or doctrines they teach us, *these doctrines being themselves wise and holy*, must have been delivered under a divine sanction, and therefore possess divine authority.

"If he (that is, the person who performs miracles) also teach lessons,—*lessons worthy of God*,—these lessons undoubtedly come to us clothed with divine authority."
—*Dr. Tattershall's Lecture*, pp. 70, 71.

we are to determine whether doctrines are "wise and holy," "self-consistent," and "worthy of God?"

Secondly. You plead that we have forfeited our claim on the fulfilment of your engagement, by a statement of opinion in our second lecture, to this effect: that miracles do not enable us to infer the intellectual infallibility of the performer. This, it seems, is an unexpected heresy, and cancels all promises. You appear to be affected by the Popish tendencies of the age; and to have adopted the notion, that no faith is to be kept with heretics. On this point we remark as follows:—

1st. We are astonished at your assertion, that this idea about miracles deprives us of any "common medium of reason" with you. Did you not "propose to discuss with us" the "evidence of the plenary inspiration of the holy Scriptures," under the persuasion that we should take the negative side? In such discussion, would you not have argued from the miracles to the inspiration? And how did you suppose that we should reply? You were well aware that we should *admit* the miracles; and equally well aware that we should *deny* the plenary inspiration of those that wrought them. It cannot be supposed that, at this point, you would have had no more to say; but you would have proceeded, as many able writers have already done, to seek some "common medium of reason,"—some considerations, that is, having force with both parties; by which you might hope to fasten the disputed connection between your premises and your conclusion.

2nd. We are still more astonished to hear that this sentiment puts us "a step beyond common Deism," "in undisputed possession of the field of infidelity," and even in "separation from our common humanity;" seeing that the opinion has been held by

Bishop Sherlock:—Who says, "Miracles cannot prove *the truth* of any doctrine; and men do not speak accurately when they say the doctrines are proved by the miracles; for, in truth, there is *no connection* between miracles and doctrines."*

John Locke:—"Even in those books which have the greatest proof of Revelation from God, and the attestation of miracles to confirm their being so, *the miracles are to be judged by the doctrine, not the doctrine by the miracles.*"†

Dr. Samuel Clarke:—"We can hardly affirm, with any certainty, that any particular effect, how great or miraculous soever it may seem to us, is beyond the power of all-created beings (whom he explains further to be, 'subordinate intelligences, *good* or *evil* angels,') in the universe to produce." He believes the Devil to "be able, by reason of his invisibility, to work *true and real miracles*;" and "whether such (*i. e.* miraculous) interposition be the immediate work of God, or of some good or evil angel, can hardly be discovered merely by the work itself."

He accordingly lays down *the conditions under which* the miracles will prove the doctrine.‡

* Sherlock's Discourses, No. 10, Hughes's edition, vol. i, p. 197, and No. 15, *Vol. I, p. 278.*

† *Lord King's Life of* Locke, p. 125.

‡ *Sermons at the Boyle* Lecture, Prop. xiv.

BISHOP FLEETWOOD :—"Spirits may perform most strange and astonishing things,—may convey men through the air, or throw a mountain two miles at a cast."*

The notions expressed by the last two writers, respecting the superhuman agency of good and evil spirits, evidently destroy, no less than the more philosophical principle of Sherlock and Locke, all power of reasoning from miracles, as such, to the divine authority and inspiration of the performers. You cannot be ignorant of the fact, that these notions prevailed among all the Fathers of both the Greek and Latin churches; that they were almost universal among Christians till very recent times; and that your own church lodges with the Bishop of the Diocese a discretionary power to license clergymen to cast out devils.†

Nor need we remind you that, by yet another process of thought, the Society of Friends assigns to miracles the rank which you think so profane. "We know," says Barclay on this subject, "that the devil can form a sound of words, and convey it to the outward ear; that he can easily deceive the outward senses, by making things appear which are not. Yea, do we not see that the Jugglers and Mountebanks can do as much as all that, by their legerdemain? God forbid then that the saint's faith should be founded on so fallacious a foundation as man's outward and fallible senses."‡ And he urges, that there must be other ways of ascertaining divine truth; for as to miracles, John the Baptist and divers of the Prophets wrought none that we hear of, and yet were both immediately and extraordinarily sent."§ By different modes of thinking, all these (Christians?) have arrived at the sentiment in question, so that we occupy "the field of infidelity," without being "separated from" at least a goodly portion of "our humanity." That this sentiment should be of so deep a dye of Deism is the more remarkable, because it is advanced and vindicated as a *scriptural sentiment*,—a plea which, however foolish, can be shown to be so, only by discussing *the interpretation* of the New Testament. You have proposed no explanation of the state of the Apostles' minds before the day of Pentecost. On that day they either did, or they did not, become more enlightened than before. If they did not, the gift of the Holy Spirit conferred no illumination; if they did, they were deficient in light before; and the miraculous powers they had possessed and exercised did not imply infallibility. We thought, indeed, that the comparative narrowness of their views before this period had been universally admitted. With respect to the appeal which in the presence of the Baptist's disciples our Lord makes to his miraculous acts, you are quite aware that we do *not* regard it as "worthless," though you say we

* Essay on Miracles, p. 99, *seq.*, as quoted by Farmer in his Dissertation on Miracles, chap. i, § 3.

† "No minister or ministers shall, *without the licence and direction of the Bishop of the Diocese*, first obtained and had under his hand and seal, ... attempt, upon any pretence whatsoever, either of possession or obsession, by fasting and prayer, to cast out any devil or devils, under pain of the imputation of imposture or cozenage, and deposition from the ministry."—*Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical*, lxxii.

‡ Apology for the True Christian Divinity, Prop. ii. pp. 35, 36.

§ Ibid. Prop x. p. 296.

"*must*" do so. These acts (the *climax* of which, however, was no miracle at all,—"the poor have the Gospel preached to them,") fully answered *the purpose for which they were appealed to*, viz., to determine whether Jesus was "He that should come," or whether John was "to look for another;" for as Bishop Sherlock remarks, though miracles may not (he says "*cannot*) prove the *truth* of any doctrine," they "prove *the commission* of the person who does them to proceed from God."* We repeat then, that we have started no topic which you did not invite; we have taken up no method of discussion which your own rules did not prescribe; we have advanced no idea for which your own Church should be unprepared. You have quitted this controversy without any justification from the unexpected nature of *our sentiments*, and we are persuaded that you can plead no discourtesy in our proposals respecting the *mechanical arrangements*. On this point we think it right to state thus publicly the overtures which we made to you, through the excellent clergyman who communicated with us as your representative. An objection having been urged by Mr. Ould to discussion through the newspapers, on the ground that they are read by "the ignorant scoffer, the sceptical, the profane," we proposed the following plan:—That for twelve or any limited number of weeks, a joint weekly pamphlet of thirty-two pages should be published, each party furnishing sixteen pages; that the first number of the series should contain a positive statement, *from each party*, of its fundamental principles in religion, of that which it undertook to assail, and that which it undertook to defend; and that within the limits of this programme, the replies in the subsequent numbers should confine themselves. Thus each party would have chosen its own ground, at first; and both would have disappeared from the public view together, at last. This proposal was rejected without any reason being assigned, except that there were "too many difficulties in the way;" and though all preliminaries were to be settled "by previous agreement," we were told that in the following "Courier" we should find a letter addressed to us, which we might answer in whatever way we thought proper. The public who have watched the proceedings in this matter will bear witness, with our consciences, that we were *not the first* to enter this controversy; that we have *not been the first* to leave it; and that, in its progress, we have departed from no pledge, and been guilty of no evasion.

And now, Gentlemen, accept from us in conclusion, our solemn protest against the language of unmeasured insult, in which, under the cover of sanctity, the associated clergymen whom you represent, have thought proper to speak of our religion: against the accusations personally addressed to us, in the presence of 3,000 people, by the Lecturers in Christ Church, of "mean subterfuges," of "sneering," of "savage grins," of "damnable blasphemy," of "the greatest imaginable guilt," of "doing despite to the Spirit of Grace," of "the most odious of crimes against the Majesty of Heaven," and in common with all Unitarians of forming our belief, from "the blindness of graceless hearts," too bad "to have been touched by any spirit of God," and against the

* *Discourses*, No. 10, Hughes's edition, vol. i, p. 197.

visible glee, fierce as Tertullian's, with which "the faithful" are reminded that ere long, *we must and shall* bow our proud knees, whether we like it or not, to the object of their peculiar worship;—so that they are sure of their triumph in heaven, however questionable it may be on earth. You began the controversy by ascribing to us one shade of "infidelity;" you end it by ascribing to us a blacker. Beneath "the lowest deep," there is it seems "a lower still." We have sat quietly under all this, bearing the rude friction upon everything that is most dear to us, assured that if anything in heaven or earth be certain, it is this;—that no spirit of God ever spake thus, or thus administered the poison of human passions, falsely labelled as the medicine of a divine love. What is the difference between your religion and ours, that this high tone (than which, to a pure moral taste, nothing surely can be *lower*) should be assumed against us? We believe, no less than you, in an infallible Revelation (though had we the misfortune to doubt it, we might be, in the sight of God, neither worse nor better than yourselves); you in a Revelation of an unintelligible Creed to the understanding; we in a Revelation of moral perfection, and the spirit of duty to the heart; you in a Revelation of the metaphysics of Deity; we in a Revelation of the character and providence of the Infinite Father; you in a Redemption which saves the few, and leaves with Hell the triumph after all; we in a Redemption which shall restore to all at length the image and the immortality of God: we *do* reserve, as you suggest, "*a sort of inspiration*" for the founders of Christianity, "a sort," as much higher than your cold, dogmatical, scientific inspiration, as the intuitions of conscience are higher than the predications of logic, and the free spirit of God, than the petty precision of men. We believe in a spiritual and moral Revelation, most awakening, most sanctifying, most holy; which *words*, being the signs of hard and definite ideas, could never express, and which is therefore pourtrayed in a mind divinely finished for the purpose, acting awhile on Earth and publicly transferred to Heaven. All men may see that such a Revelation corresponds well with the medium which conveys it: but a set of scholastic propositions, like Articles and Creeds, might as well have been written on the sky; and many a bitter doubt and bitterer controversy might have been spared.

We believe, Gentlemen, that the minds of serious and considerate persons are weary of the aggressions of Churches upon the private and secret faith of the individual heart; that they will not long be forced to live on the dry husks of Creeds which have lost the kernel of true life; nor accept mere puzzles as divine mysteries. It is at the peril of all religion that its illimitable truths are embalmed in definite formulas, and the abyss of God confidently measured by thrusting out the foot-rule of ecclesiastical wisdom. The things most holy cannot without injury be thus turned from the contemplation of the affections, to the small criticism of the intellect: and the acute and polished dividing-knife of dialectics, when applied to cut theology into propositions, is apt to leave scarce a shred of faith.

That all professing ministers *of the* Gospel may speedily turn from

their divisions of belief to a hearty union of spirit, is the desire and prayer of

Us, who in this temper, and in better times, might have been owned as

Your fellow-labourers,

JAMES MARTINEAU.
JOHN HAMILTON THOM.
HENRY GILES.

March 25th, 1839.

THE

PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE

OF THE

UNITARIAN CONTROVERSY;

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN PARADISE STREET CHAPEL, LIVERPOOL,

ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1839,

BY

REV. JOHN HAMILTON THOM.

BEING THE FIRST OF A SERIES, TO BE DELIVERED WEEKLY, IN ANSWER TO A COURSE OF LECTURES AGAINST UNITARIANISM, IN CHRIST CHURCH, LIVERPOOL, BY THIRTEEN CLERGYMEN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

LIVERPOOL:

WILLMER AND SMITH, 32, CHURCH STREET.

JOHN GREEN, NEWGATE STREET, LONDON; FORREST AND FOGG, MANCHESTER; J. DRAKE, BIRMINGHAM; W. TAIT, EDINBURGH; HEDDERWICK AND SON, GLASGOW; ARCHER AND SON, BELFAST; CUMMING, DUBLIN; KING AND CO., CORK; WILEY AND PUTNAM, NEW YORK; CAREY, PHILADELPHIA; AND MUNROE AND CO., BOSTON.

1839.

WILLMER AND SMITH,
32, CHURCH STREET, LIVERPOOL.

An attempt has been made, in a preface to the Lecture to which the following pages are a reply, to break the force, by anticipation, of the statements they contain. The Answerer, however, evidently did not hear the statements; and the preface proceeds upon some rumour of what was said. If Clergymen are conscientiously prevented from going to hear Unitarians, they ought also to be conscientiously prevented from answering what they did not hear. I am represented as saying that Trinitarians do not gather, but *lecture:* I said Trinitarianism does not gather, but *scatters.* I am represented as arguing the tendency of Trinitarianism to Popery from the recent movement of the Oxford Tract divines in that direction: I argued the tendency of Trinitarianism to Popery *from its fundamental principles,* and I referred to the Oxford movement as one of the visible manifestations of the demonstrated tendency.

I shall notice the instances in which the Preface proceeds upon anything like a true apprehension of what was said.

1. Page vii, viii.—"When men tell us that Jesus did not weep over *errors of opinion,* we maintain that it was the 'error of opinion' which led them to reject him as the Messiah over which he lamented." Now, 1. Is the unbelief of the Jews in the Christ, when he was exhibiting his divine credentials in his Character and in his Miracles before their eyes and to their hearts, in any respect similar to our unbelief in the doctrine of the Trinity, which we, accepting both the Scriptures and Christ, declare we cannot find to be authorized by either? And 2. Is it not evident that Jesus attributed the unbelief of the Jews to *Moral* Causes, and that therefore, and *only* therefore, he condemned it? "This is the Condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, *because their deeds were evil.*" John iii. 19.

2. Page viii.—"But these principles involve a violation of unity." And what if they do? Did not our Saviour emphatically declare, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace but a sword." 1. Christ is here not describing the final purpose of his Mission nor the natural operation of his Spirit, but the immediate opposition and contention which his religion would excite both in Jew and Gentile before it rooted out the old Faiths: And 2. The Christ is not here alluding to differences between *Christians themselves,* between those who did accept him; but to the necessary conflict of the Spirit of Jesus with the Antagonist spirits of Judaism and of Heathenism. This also is the great subject of the Book of Revelations.

3. Page xi.—"But it is a priestly spirit which says, 'you must believe.'" This ought to be reckoned *with the instances* in which the answer proceeds

upon an incorrect rumour of what was said; which was to this effect,—"that it is the priestly spirit, whose constant cry is, unless you believe *this doctrine*, and unless you believe *that doctrine*, you cannot be saved." Belief in Jesus, entire spiritual Trust in him, as, for all providential purposes, one with God, we have explicitly stated as our view of the essentials of Christianity.

Page xxi.—We do not know how far the Author extends his approval of "the tactics of holy war." For ourselves we disapprove of all such tactics, especially the tactics of substituting a mere illustration or practical verification of an argument, for the argument itself, and then dealing with the illustration as if there was no general principle behind it, as if the illustration was represented as *the grounds* of the principle, when it was only represented as one of its outward operations. And yet this "argumentum a particulari ad universale," is one which the author employs in his description of Unitarianism in almost every page of his Lecture.

J. H. T.

THE

PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE

OF THE

UNITARIAN CONTROVERSY.

COLOSSIANS I. 27, 28.—*Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.*

GALATIANS II. 4, 5.—*And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.*

WERE some stranger to our religion inquiring what it is to be a Christian, there are two quarters from which he might derive his ideas of that character. He might draw near to him who is the only perfect expression of Christianity, and when he had sat at the feet of Jesus, listening with hushed heart, and then arisen and joined himself to the meek Prophet of Mercy on his way of Love, he might receive from Christ his impressions of Christianity and catch from the living Master the type of a disciple: or he might turn for information to the Christians of the day, selecting for examination the largest and most prominent classes, and so gather from the common specimen his impressions of their temper, their spirit, and their faith. Each of these

modes of inquiry would produce a result of Truth; but the one would be a Truth of reality, and the other only a Truth of description; the one would present to us what we were seeking, the true idea of a Christian; the other would show with what degree of faithfulness Christians had preserved the spirit of the original, or whether in the copy, in the distant reflection, the features had been faded, marred, distorted; the one would furnish us with the great Master's idea of a Disciple, the other would exhibit the Disciple as a representative of the Master, and assuming to be his Image to the world; in a word the one would be Christ's idea of a Christian; the other would be only a Christian's idea of Christ. Oh, thanks be to God for the *written* Gospel, for the Epistles written on men's hearts, the living transcripts, give us no worthy ideas of Christ; and were it not for those silent witnesses which speak from a passionless page, and cannot be made to wear the garb of party, which reflect Christ's realities, and not man's ideas, the Image of Jesus had long since been irrecoverably lost!

Let us then for a moment place ourselves beside Jesus, and learn from the Christ what it is to be a Christian. I hear him inviting the weary and the heavy laden to come and find rest unto their souls. I listen for that doctrine of rest, the faith that gives the sin-bound peace. I hear him speak of God, and they are indeed healing words of peace, intended to quell a superstition and a controversy: "God is a spirit: the hour cometh and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him."* I hear him speak of Duty: "The Lord our God is one Lord, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: This is the first Commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. This do and thou shalt

* John iv. 23, 24.

live." I hear him speak of Heaven: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say lo here, or lo there, for behold the kingdom of God is within you."* I hear him speak to Sin, melted, and transformed into penitence: "To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. Thy faith hath saved thee. Go in peace. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee." I hear him speak of DISCIPLESHIP: "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."† "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love. Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another."‡

We turn now from the words to the life of the great Teacher, in the endeavour to get a more definite idea of Duty, Discipleship, and Faith. The character of Jesus is the best, fullest, and truest interpretation of the words of Jesus. His life is his own translation of his own precepts into the language of action. We surely cannot be far from the true sources of Christianity when we first drink his words into our hearts, and then follow him with reverent steps and with gazing eyes, to watch his own illustrations of those words, to behold

* Luke xvii. 20, 21. † John xiv. 21; xv. 8, 9, 10. ‡ John xiii. 35.

the spirit breathing in the life, and from the fulness of his character to learn the fulness of his precepts. Surely Christ embodied and impersonated his own teachings. Surely the life of Christ is undoubted Christianity. Surely his character is Christian Duty; and his destiny Christian Faith. Surely he knew and exhibited the practical tendencies of his own doctrines; and surely to set him up at the fountain-head of our moral being, as God's image to the conscience, and to strive in all things to be like unto him, "whom we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus,"—cannot be to preach "another gospel," or to mistake fatally the essentials of Discipleship. "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."* The definition of a Christian, when deduced from the words and the life of the Christ himself, thus comes out to be—one who TRUSTS himself in all things to that God of whom Jesus was the image; and who CONFORMS himself in all things to that will of God of which Jesus was the perfect expression. "This is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."†

Turn we now to a different quarter for an answer to our inquiry what it is to be a Christian; from the one Master to the multitude of professors; from the original image, distinct and bright, to the transmitted reflections, all claiming to be genuine copies; from the single voice, sweet and clear, to the confusion of jarring tongues; from the pure fountain to the impure streams; from Christ to Christians. I am entirely guiltless of the intention of satire, but it is quite impossible to avoid the appearance of it in any attempt to give the features of Christianity as they appear in the Christians of the day, in those, that is, who claim to be Christians exclusively; for the tamest truth of description excites ideas

* John xiv. 23. † John xvii. 3.

of the true Christ, so contrasted, that it has, without intention, all the effect of sarcasm. Surely a stranger to the only true source of our religion, examining its actual forms as they exist in the world, and selecting its characteristics from that which is largest and most prominent, would not be guilty of misrepresentation, if he described a Christian as one who was shut up within the narrowest circle of religious ideas; who identified himself and his opinions with absolute Truth; who idolized himself and his sect as the only friends of God; who was so unconscious of a liability to err, that he breathed, unknowingly, an atmosphere of infallibility, and insulted the Rights of other men, not more fallible than himself, without perceiving the invasion;—one so used to arrogate to himself and to his own party, all excellence and all truth, that he starts in surprise, innocent of what can be meant, when he is told that he is pressing on the liberties of other minds, who, with as deep an interest as he can have in their own salvation, have searched into these things and read differently the mind of God;—as one who regards a few metaphysical propositions, confessedly unintelligible as the only hope of human salvation, and who, in the confidence of this faith, speaks to his fellow men as if he had secret council with God; assumes to be on "a religious level" nearer to the spirit of the most High, who, on that more elevated standing, drops more readily into his heart communications from Heaven;—and who, when he pays any regard to other men at all, looks down upon them from an eminence; assumes as proved their ignorance, their errors, and their sins; insults their opinions; treats with no brotherly respect the convictions of Truth and the dictates of Conscience which to them are Voices from the living God; denies that they have equal zeal for truth, or equal ability to discover it; scoffs at the idea of religious equality, and looks amazed when others tell him, though it be in apostolic words, that they will not "give place by subjection, no, not for an hour;"

and finally adds mockery to insult and wrong, by telling the men whom he so treats, that all this is Christian affection, and an interest in their souls.

It is painful to put last in order, not the true, but the untrue idea of a Christian, and therefore to set us right, I will present the original picture again in apostolic words. "Hereby we do know that we know him if we keep his commandments." "Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him." "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is *born* of him." "Let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."*

There is still another way of bringing into comparison the spirit of Christ and the character of that Christianity which assumes to itself to be the only fruit of his spirit. We can compare the existing state of the Christian world with the expectations of Jesus, with that state of things to which he looked forward as the Reign of his spirit, the Kingdom of the true Gospel upon earth. If the Christianity that prevails has not realized the expectations of Christ, then its practical tendency is evidently not in the direction of the true Gospel; it is, to the extent of the failure, a departure from the power and character of the original spirit. Christ could not be mistaken about the proper operations of his own spirit; and the system whose operations do not fulfil his promises cannot contain a full and perfect ministration of his spirit. And this argument will amount to something like a demonstration, if we can show, first, that this system which has failed to realize the expectations of Jesus as to the condition of his Church, has, for large tracts both of time and space, been the prevailing influence of the Christian world, with nothing to obstruct it, so that it has had full and free scope to work its own works, and to manifest its own spirit; and

* 1 John ii. 3, 5, 29; iii. 7.

secondly, if we can point to *the something* in that system, which manifestly has caused it to be destructive of those hopes, and to work counter to this expectation of Christ.

There is no sublimer idea of Christianity than its delightful vision of a UNIVERSAL CHURCH; the kingdom of the Gospel becoming a kingdom of Heaven on earth; uniting the nations by a spiritual bond; in every heart among the families of men kindling the same solemn ideas, and opening the same living springs; subduing the differences of class and country by the affinities of worship, by kindred images of Hope, of Duty, and of God becoming a meeting place for the thoughts of men; including every form and variety of mind within that spiritual faith which leads onwards to the infinite, yet presents distinct ideas to the heart of childhood, and feeds the sources of an infant's prayer; assembling in their countless homes the Brotherhood of man around the spiritual altar of one Father and one God, whose presence is a Temple wherein all are gathered, and whose Spirit, dwelling in each heart, meets and returns the seekings of all his children.

Such was the Christian vision of the CHURCH UNIVERSAL, of the union of all good men in the worship of one God under the leadership of his Image, growing up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.

Such was the sublime idea that filled the mind of Jesus when he looked forward in heavenly faith, to the reign of his spirit, the kingdom of his Gospel in the world. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd."* "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Such also was the magnificent and healing

* John x. 16; xvii. 20, 21.

view that filled the hearts of the Apostles when they protested against burdens being laid upon Christ's freemen; rebuked the first manifestations of a sectarian Christianity; and would acknowledge no distinctions between those who were walking in the steps of the same master, and moulding their souls into the same similitude of Christ. "There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love."* "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. And there are differences of administration, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one spirit." "That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular."†

Such is the Christian and Apostolic view of the Church of Christ on earth. Turn we now to the actual Church. Is it a realization of this divine image of the mind of Jesus? Is

* Ephes. iv. † 1 Cor. xii.

there in it a unity of spirit in the bond of peace? Do the branches abide in the Vine? Do the scattered and warring members make one spirit in one body? Alas! could there be a sadder mockery, than to pretend to seek in our prevalent Christianity any features corresponding to this divine conception?

Trinitarian Christianity is founded upon a principle directly opposed to the realization of this prospect and vision of Jesus. It declares that there shall be no unity but a doctrinal unity. It rejects that moral and spiritual union which is the bond of peace, and which, as subsisting among his followers, Christ looked forward to as the great proof to the world that God had sent him;—and it declares that there shall be no bonds but the bonds of Creeds. It breaks up the Christian world into distinct and mutually repulsive parties; each claiming—not to be disciples of the life of Christ—not to be one with him as he was one with God, in will, aspiration, and purpose of soul, but—to be in possession of the exact doctrinal ideas which constitute a saving faith, of a certain intellectual process of belief, through which alone God conducts the sinner into Heaven, and without which no soul, whatever may be its spiritual oneness with Jesus and his Father, can be saved. Now it is clear that a system such as this, requiring not a unity of spirit, but a unity of opinion, cannot be that primitive Gospel, which, according to the expectation of the Saviour, was to gather all the believers under Heaven into a universal Church. Trinitarianism, as a system, does not, and cannot, work out these fruits of the spirit of Christ. It does not gather, but scatters; it does not collect into one; but disunites, severs, and casts out. It disowns all harmony but the harmony of metaphysical conceptions. It has no wider way of salvation, no broader bond of peace, no more open road to Heaven, than a coincidence of ideas, on the essence of the Deity, the mysterious modes of the divine existence; a person in whom there are two natures; and

then, again, a nature in which there are three persons; and this as preparatory to a moral process, in which a penalty is paid by substitution for a guilt incurred by substitution. I ask not now whether these ideas are true; whether they are realities of God's mind; but I ask, Have they ever been, or can they ever be, bonds of union for a Church Universal? Are these the grand affinities towards which all hearts shall be drawn; and which, breaking down our minor distinctions into less than nothing, shall bind together the families of man in the fellowship of one spirit? You all know, every man knows, that a uniformity of opinion is an impossibility; that God has nowhere provided the means for producing it; that nowhere does it exist; no—not in that closely-fenced and strictly-articled Church, whose bosom at this very hour is rent by heresies, even as, throughout all her history, they shattered the unity and split the bosom even of infallible Rome; and seeing, therefore, that there is no such doctrinal unity on earth, if Jesus understood his own gospel, this cannot be the oneness with his Father and himself, to which he looked forward as the Reign of his Spirit in the world. And yet the Trinitarian Church of England, one of whose Ministers when, on a late occasion, denouncing Unitarian heresies, took the opportunity to give the relief of expression to his horror of other heresies in the bosom of his own communion, and openly denounced as heretics ordained clergymen and dignitaries of his own Church,—this Church of England, notwithstanding all this, still claims to be the great bulwark, among Protestants, of the unity of the Faith, the dignified rebuker of schisms and sects; and still offers to the harassed and distracted, to the rent and divided body of Christ, a creed—and what a creed!—as the only bond of agreement and of peace.

Either, then, Christ miscalculated the workings of his own spirit, when he contemplated a Universal Church as its natural fruit; or Trinitarianism, when it destroys the spiritual

union of the Church, a moral oneness with Jesus and with his Father, by its demand for a doctrinal conformity, is, to the extent of this operation, an Antichrist, a departure from the healing and uniting spirit of the true Gospel. Let me, for the sake of distinctness, put you in possession of the exact difference between the fundamental principles of Unitarian and Trinitarian Christianity. To a Unitarian the essentials of Christianity are;—that a man takes into his heart the moral image of Jesus, and loves it supremely, and trusts it absolutely as his example of perfection, and his leader up to God. If I was asked to define a Christian, I would say that he was one who took Jesus Christ as he is presented in the gospels, as his best idea of Duty, and his best programme of Heaven; the very ideal of the religious spirit and life; the perfect image of God; and the perfect model for man. These are a Unitarian's essentials of Christianity. To a Trinitarian the essentials of a Christian are these: not that he receive Jesus as his image of God, his model of Duty, and his type of Heaven,—but that he receive a certain metaphysical Creed, certain doctrinal ideas, which "except he keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly." Now, a union of all *hearts*, under the leadership of one Christ, and in the love and reverence of one moral Spirit, is a possible thing; but a union of all *minds* in the reception of certain metaphysical ideas which the minds of Milton, of Newton, and of Locke, could not find, either in Reason or in Scripture, is not a possible thing: and therefore my first assertion of the "practical importance" of the Unitarian Controversy is to this effect:—that Trinitarianism, by its fundamental principle of a doctrinal conformity, a principle not known to the true gospel, is the originating cause of all religious disunion and strife; the creator of all schisms, sects, and heresies; the great and effectual antagonist of any realization of that sublimest and most heavenly conception of the Saviour—a Universal Church, cherishing the same Hopes,

studying the same Models, trusting to the same Image of God to guide us to His presence,—a union of all hearts, seeking to be one, even as God and Christ were one, in the fellowship of the same spirit. This is my heaviest indictment against the practice of Trinitarianism, that it destroys Christ's delightful image of his Spirit's Reign on earth, and creates in its place—what shall I say?—the strife and disunion, the fears of the weak and the arrogance of the coarse; the wranglings of creeds and the absence of love; the heat of controversy and the chill of religion, through the midst of which we are now passing.*

Trinitarianism has long been the prevailing influence of the Christian world; it holds all the religious power of these countries in its own hands; there is nothing external to prevent its carrying into existence its own ideas; and if in the day of its power it has not wrought the works and realized the hopes of Christ, it must be because it has worked in another spirit, and preached another gospel; adding to the primitive "glad tidings" of "repentance and remission of sins," other conditions which are not glad tidings, and which are not Christ's. Now not only can we point to the actual failure in proof of the absence of the true spirit, *but we can lay our finger upon the element of mischief*, and demonstrate it to be the parent of the evils we deplore, the frustrator of the hope of Christ. Trinitarianism, by demanding a doctrinal assimilation, an intellectual instead of a spiritual union, and wielding, as it does, the prevailing influences of religion, has, in the day of its power, forcibly prevented the formation of that universal Church which Christ contemplated. And until it drops from its essentials the doctrinal oneness, and substitutes in its place a spiritual oneness derived from obedience to God as he is manifested in Jesus, it cannot gather into one fold, and constitute the kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

* Note.

Now let us suppose, for a moment, that this doctrinal conformity is required by Christianity, and that not TRUST in Christ, but belief of Creeds, constitutes acceptance of the gospel. Then comes the question, and a most perplexing one it would be, how can any one be sure that the creed he trusts to contains exactly the ideas to which God has annexed safety? Supposing creeds to be the essentials of Christianity, then how can any Christian be sure that he has got the true creed? I can easily conceive with what fear, with what apprehensions of mind, with what a parallyzed intellect, and unconfiding heart, sinking the love of truth in selfish terrors, a man trembling under the conviction that his everlasting safety depended upon his reception of a doctrine, would come to the examination of the Scriptures; I can well conceive how his judgment would be gradually bereft of all calm and trustful independence; how his fears and passions would slavishly draw him over to whatever party predominated in intolerance, and in the confidence of their assumptions, frightening him into the belief that safety was with *them*, for that if creeds were the essentials of salvation, the more of creed the more of certainty;—but after all this sacrifice has been submitted to, after terror has wrought its work, and the intellect has surrendered to the passions—after the man in the pursuit of selfish safety has given up his Reason and his free mind, and stooped his neck to the yoke,—I cannot see how in any way he has altered or bettered his position; I cannot see how he has attained the end for which he has paid such degrading wages; how he can be certain that he has got the creed which ensures salvation;—and after having sold his birth-right, parted with his free soul for the sake of a safety built upon doctrines, he discovers at last, *unless he is a Roman Catholic*, that he has no absolute certainty of these doctrines being the true ones; he is still left in doubt whether after all he is in possession of the particular creed that works salvation—whether, after all, he has not bowed down his soul

for nothing. If God requires from men certain doctrinal convictions as necessary to salvation, then how can any man be sure that he has got the true convictions? Even the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Bible, if we believed in it, which we do not, would not relieve a Protestant Trinitarian of this difficulty: for those who agree in believing the Bible in every word inspired, can draw from it very different meanings, as none have reason to know better than the divines of the English Church.

I am tempted to give a few specimens of the differences between existing divines of the Church of England on the very points of accusation against Unitarianism. You are aware of the place that the Atonement holds in Evangelical preaching. Listen then to the new party in the Church, the leaders of which are, one of them, the Oxford Professor of Hebrew and a Canon of Christ Church, and the others distinguished both in the Church and in the University. These are their words:—"We now proceed to the consideration of a subject most important in this point of view,—the prevailing notion of bringing forward the Atonement explicitly and prominently on all occasions. It is evidently quite opposed to what we consider the teaching of Scripture, nor do we find any sanction for it in the gospels. *If* the Epistles of St. Paul *appear* to favour it, it is only at first sight."* Again, you are aware of the importance attached to the doctrine of Justification by Faith, that test, as it is described, of a rising or a falling church. Listen then once more to one of the heads of the Oxford party:—"The instrument of our righteousness, I would maintain, is *holy baptism*. *Our Church* considers it to be the *Sacrament of Baptism*; *they* (the Reformers) consider it to be *Faith*. *** Christians are justified by the communication of an inward, most sacred, and most mysterious gift. From the very time of baptism they are temples of the Holy

* The Oxford Tracts, No. 80, as quoted in "Dr. Hook's 'Call to Union,' answered."

Ghost.*** Faith, then, being the appointed representative of baptism, derives its authority and virtue from that which it represents. It is justifying *because of baptism*; it is the faith of the baptized, of the regenerate, of the justified. Faith does not precede justification; but justification precedes faith, and makes it justifying."* I must quote one other sentiment of this Oxford section of the English Protestant Church, respecting the MASS:—"At the time of the Reformation, we, in common with all the West, possessed the rite of the Roman Church, or St. Peter's Liturgy. This *sacred*, and *most precious* monument, then of the Apostles, our reformers received whole and entire from their predecessors, and *they mutilated the tradition* of 1500 years."† Now it only bears out my argument that this movement of Trinitarianism is in the direction of Popery.

Such being the doctrinal uniformity of the Church of England, where then is the infallible authority that is to put me in possession of those doctrinal ideas, that absolute truth, without which I cannot be saved? Having got an inspired Bible, I still want an inspired Interpreter, who, out of all the possible meanings that the words will bear, will set aside all the wrong ones, and select that one interpretation which, in the shape of doctrine, God has made the source of safety. Where is this Interpreter to be found? Where am I to look for this infallible authority, which is to explain to me the exact sense of the Bible, without which I cannot be saved, and to acquaint me with the very ideas of God? Is it the Church of England that is to do for me this important service; to be my infallible guide through the possible meanings of words; and to present me with the one creed that will operate as a charm for my salvation? Oh no! for the Church is Protestant, and recognizes the sufficiency of Scripture, and the right of free inquiry, and rails at the Pope because he denies these things. But still I ask, if I cannot be saved without this doc-

* Newman on Justification. † Newman.

trinal truth, where am I to find it, and how can I feel certain that I have it? A Roman Catholic would relieve me of my difficulties. He would treat me more kindly, and with an ampler provision for my security, than do the divines of the English Church. They tell me that my salvation depends upon my having the true creed, and then they leave me in the dark, without any means of ascertaining what the true creed is, and whether I have it or not. The Roman Catholics, on the other hand, seeing that exact truth is necessary, take care to provide for me an infallible Judge of truth. They are merciful in the accuracy of their provisions for relieving my fears, when compared with the worse than Egyptian inconsistency, the contradictory tyranny of my Protestant taskmasters. The Egyptians asked for bricks, and provided no straw. The Church of England asks for absolute Truth, and provides no judge of Truth. And this it does in the face of the fact that, not even to its own clergymen is the inspired Bible a source of certainty; that three distinctly marked divisions now constitute the Unity of the Church, and dwell, not peaceably, together.

To any man, then, who believes that doctrinal convictions are the essentials of Christianity, there is no escape from Popery. Out of Popery, there is no Church that professes to have interpreted Scripture with infallible certainty. If I am to be saved by a true creed, show me the divinely appointed tribunal, and let me bow down before it. But do not tell me, unless you are a Roman Catholic, that I must be saved by Truth, and that your Truth is the one to which I must bow down my soul, or perish everlastingly. One man's Truth is as good as another man's Truth, unless there is a divinely appointed tribunal to judge between them.* Where is this tribunal? I know it is supposed to be in the Roman Catholic Church; and I know that the English Church, if it possessed such a tribunal,

* Note.

could not speak with a whit more confidence than it does. I enter it then as my second indictment against the practice of Trinitarianism, that by building the Church of Christ upon the foundation of a doctrinal uniformity, it is an ally of Popery; that if it was consistent with itself, it would be Popish altogether; and that this is not a mere tendency but actually taking effect, is manifested in that Church which is most open to the temptations of spiritual ambition, by its gradual and lately accelerating movements in the direction of Roman Catholicism. I know that the Evangelicals denounce the Oxford modification of Popery, but they are both of one spirit, and neither will find their natural issues until they fall into the arms of the infallible Church, and leave whatever Protestantism still remains in the land, unencumbered by their presence.

Listen to some of the Clergymen of the Church of England, and tell me, can you distinguish their tones from the tones of Popery? I have lately done so. I heard this language, I mean language to this effect: "Unitarians think our pity insulting, because they are not conscious of requiring of it: but when Jesus wept over Jerusalem, was his pity an insult to those who had no sympathy with the sources of his tears?" So that we are left to infer, first, that he who uses this language knows our need as fully as Jesus did, when amid the brief acclaim of his followers, he forgot the momentary triumph, and his sympathy gushed out in tears wept over the doomed city—and, secondly, that the speculative errors of Unitarians, supposing them to be such, require tears of the same description as did the crimes of Jerusalem. Did Jesus ever weep for errors of opinion; over Samaritan heresies for instance? "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives; but to save them."

Again I heard, in substance, this language, and could not distinguish it from Popery. "Christianity must have its essen-

tials; these to us are the Deity of Christ; the corruption of human nature; and the remedy of a vicarious sacrifice. The Unitarians who deny these points we therefore do not hold to be Christians, and not believing them to be so, we plainly tell them so." And accordingly they treat us as if we were not. Now I acknowledge that this is entirely consistent upon their part. They make the essentials of Christianity to consist in doctrinal ideas, and consequently, whether they choose it or not, and almost without knowing it, they are forced to assume the tones of Popish Infallibility, and to decide authoritatively, by their metaphysical standard, who are Christians and who are not. I am quite aware that this is not intentional arrogance on their part, but a necessity in which their first principles involve them. They cannot begin with a Salvation through creeds, without ending in Popery; and of all the forms of Popery, that which professes Protestantism, is the most offensive.

It was a fresh proof to me of the authoritative character which Trinitarianism by necessity assumes, when I heard naturally and unconsciously the same kind of doctrinal compactness ascribed to ourselves, as if a church could not exist without a fixed creed; and quotations from all sorts of minds brought forward, without a suspicion, but they were all received among us as recognized standards of opinion. There were Arians and Humanitarians, Necessarians and Libertarians, and one foreign writer, who, as I am informed, was no Christian at all—and all these were appealed to as standards of Unitarianism. Now we certainly glory in it that our religion does not destroy our individuality; that in consistency with the great principle of Christ being our Leader, we tolerate freely intellectual differences, and encourage the virtues of free thought and speech; but it is a little unfortunate, and a little unfair, if the fundamental principles of Unitarian Theology and Religion are to be answerable, with their life, for all the sayings of all the

Unitarians from Marcion and the Ebionites down to the present day. Take one form of Unitarianism as it is represented by Priestley; or take another and better form of it as it is represented by Channing; but do not confuse in one two minds so radically different, and call a combination which never had existence, the Unitarian Faith. It was owing to this Popish idea that all Religions must have a doctrinal compactness, that I heard a sentiment of Priestley's, which I entirely disown, imputing idolatry to Trinitarians, ascribed to all Unitarians. If Unitarians worshipped Christ not believing him to be God *they* would be idolaters: but Trinitarians worshipping one God in three persons, and still believing him to be one, are as certainly not Polytheists. Again I heard the Improved Version stated to be the Unitarian Bible: and that the Unitarians not finding their favourite doctrines in the actual Bible made a Bible for themselves. Now let it be known that this new Bible is simply an English Version of the New Testament having for its basis or model a translation made by an Archbishop of the United Church of England and Ireland, a circumstance which we were not told; that it is founded upon the translation of Archbishop Newcome; that it is not used in Unitarian worship and possesses no authority amongst us except such as it may derive from its just merits, which are not generally rated by us as very high: and lastly that no one is answerable for it except its editors,* and not even they any longer than they choose. And yet, one would suppose, that the Church of England divines might be sufficiently conversant with varieties of opinion, even in a church more strictly bound than ours, and ought not to fall into the error of taking any book whatever, or any man whatever, as the standards of a faith. With all our dif-

* It is absurd to say that a work becomes a standard authority, because a Book Society admits it into its Catalogue, or thinks it objects of sufficient importance to aid in its publication. Doubtless the Unitarian society thought the "Improved Version" valuable as a Scriptural aid.

ferences I am not aware that our bond of union covers wider varieties of opinion on the great questions of Theology and Criticism, than those which separate Bishop Marsh, Bishop Butler of Durham, Archdeacon Paley, to say nothing of the older and nobler school of Sherlock and Barrow,* Tillotson and Taylor, from the modern Evangelical Divines; and both from the Oxford approach to Popery, a late movement in the direction which we have now endeavoured to show is the destined path of Creeds.

But I shall be asked, has Christianity no essentials, and may a man believe anything he likes, and yet be a Christian? I answer that the essential belief of a Christian is the belief that Jesus Christ is the moral image of God; that to be one with him is to be one with his Father and become fitted for that Heaven in harmony with which his mind was made; and that any doctrinal ideas which a man can hold in consistency with this act of spiritual allegiance, he may hold, and yet be a Christian.

And yet we do not hold that all doctrines are indifferent, for we think that some are nearer than others to the great realities of God; that some, more than others, are in harmony with the mind of Christ; that some more than others give us solemn and inspiring views of the infinite Spirit; worthy conceptions of the mission and offices of Jesus, and elevating sympathies with his character; sublime and true ideas of Duty; peaceful yet awful convictions of the retributions of God; and therefore are more effectual to build us up in the oneness with his Father and with himself, which is the sublimest aim of Christ. Other views may operate powerfully on those who hold them; but as long as they do not accord with our best ideas of perfection, with our noblest views of the character of Jesus and of God, they cannot confer upon *us* that salvation which we take to be the essence of the Gospel, assimilation to the infinite Spirit as we know him through his

* Note.

Image, perfect Trust in our heavenly Father, as he is manifested in Christ.

I warn you against an imposture that is practised upon you, not knowingly but ignorantly, in the use that is made of such expressions as, 'salvation by faith and not by works,' and St. Paul's anathema on those who preached another Gospel, which he declared was not another *gospel*, that is, that it did not contain "*glad tidings*," and was therefore no gospel at all. Now salvation by 'faith' does not mean salvation by doctrines, but by TRUST in Jesus Christ as our spiritual Master, God's representative to man; and exemption from 'works' does not mean exemption from moral excellence, but exemption from all the works and conditions of the Jewish Law, from which, with all the bondage of its sacrifices, services and exactions, the Gospel, as offered by Christ, was the glad tidings of deliverance. It is on this account that St. Paul denounces any man who preaches another gospel, that is who adds to it unspiritual conditions which would bring men again under the yoke of the Law, and change the glad tidings of Liberty into the burdens of a woeful superstition. "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." To go back to the bondage of the law, is to make the spiritual liberty of Christ's freemen of no avail. Now the scriptural knowledge that is necessary for these explanations is of the scantiest measure; that Faith means moral Trust, spiritual acceptance and confidence; that works frequently mean, when used by Paul, not Christian holiness but Jewish Ceremonies; and that the Gospel means not a scheme of doctrines but the glad Message of deliverance from every yoke of bondage: and yet the false meanings that lurk under these words, are again and again thrust forward as Scripture evidence for doctrines entirely alien to their spirit. Elsewhere, would the anathema of the noble-minded Apostle be ready to descend; upon all other additions as well as Jewish ones, to Christ's gospel of spiritual liberty.*

* Note.

I have contrasted the fundamental principles of Trinitarian and Unitarian Christianity, and, without entering into their peculiar tenets, I have shown that the practical tendency of Trinitarianism is to disunite the Church of Christ; to lead to Popery as the only known provision for doctrinal certainty; and to preach "another gospel," which, to us at least, is no gospel at all, and has defaced the grace and glory of the original message. I have now to proceed to the particular views in which these principles respectively issue when applied to the examination of the Scriptures, and to contrast the practical tendencies of the distinguishing doctrines of Unitarian and Trinitarian Christianity. The Unitarians think that Trinitarianism, with all its dependent ideas, is not a system which the Scriptures would of their own accord naturally suggest to a free mind, examining them without prejudice or fear, in a spirit of confidingness in God and in truth; and that its peculiar set of notions are chiefly arrived at by inferences drawn from the Scriptures in the spirit of preconceived theories, and under the intimidation of priest-taught fears. We recognize nothing but the priestly spirit in all those systems whose cry is, "unless you believe this and unless you believe that, you cannot be saved;" and acknowledging no salvation but that of a spirit morally one with God and with his Christ, salvation from superstition, and salvation from sin, and salvation from unconfiding fears; and believing that all truth is one and from God, we confidently appeal, in confirmation of our scriptural soundness, to that great and independent test of Truth which is furnished by the moral tendencies of doctrines. I shall aim to show that Unitarianism has more power both with the understanding and the heart; that the Intellect which Trinitarianism has no resource but to disparage, and the Reason at which I lately heard, doubtless not without good reasons, such melancholy scoffs, (for what can be more melancholy than to hear a man scoffing at Reason, and attempting to *reason* men into a contempt for Reason?), that this Reason, our ray of the divine mind, *we* enlist on the side of our reli-

gion and of our souls;—that the spiritual nature which Trinitarianism insults and scorns, we contemplate with trembling reverence as made for holiness and for God;—and that the personal holiness and love, the Christ-like spirit and the Christ-like life to which Trinitarianism assigns a secondary place, and in disparagement of which it can stumble, as happened on a late occasion, on a condemnation of the Scripture law, that every man shall be judged according to his works*—this holy living and dying *we* set forth as the very salvation of the sons of God, the very way of spiritual safety trodden by the Forerunner and the Saviour, even Christ the righteous.

I desire to be understood to affirm nothing about the actual characters of those who hold views which I think unfriendly to the soul. The tendencies of opinions may be counteracted: but still wherever there is error, that is, wherever there is any thing not conformed to the mind of God, *there* there is, to the extent of its agency, a principle of evil, or at least of misdirection, at the fountain of our life, though there may also be sweetening influences which are strong enough to neutralize its power. Trinitarianism does not produce all its natural fruits, though it produces some that are sufficiently deplorable, because it is kept in check by the better principles of our nature, with which it is not in alliance. It is vain to pretend that a man's belief has no influence upon his life and upon his soul. The belief of a man is that which animates his sentiments, and peoples his imagination, and provides objects for his heart;—and if he bears no impress of it upon his character, it is only because it forms no real part of his spiritual existence, it is not written upon the living tablets of the mind. Believing then that our views of Truth, when they become a part of our living thoughts, woven into the spiritual frame and the daily food of the mind, *do* exercise a controlling influence over the whole being, it is our ardent desire to discover

* See Rev. F. Ould's Lecture, page 35.

those views of the gospel which put forth most mightily this power over the heart, and we openly confess, that it is because we believe it possesses an unrivalled efficacy to save the soul, by bringing it into a holy and trustful union with God and Christ, that we value unspeakably, and adhere to through all temptation and scorn, the faith that is in us. To us it is the light, as it is the gift of God, and we will not abandon it, so long as it points Conscience to the things that are before; leads us up to God through the love and imitation of his Christ; speaks with heavenly serenity of grand and tranquillizing truths in moments of trial: and true to our spiritual connexions with Heaven, suffers our sins to have no peace, and our virtues no fears.

I shall endeavour, briefly but distinctly, to bring out the prominent points of difference between Unitarian and Trinitarian Christianity, in their moral aspects.

And, first, Unitarianism alone puts forth the great view that the moral and spiritual character of the mind itself is its own recompense, its own glory, its own heaven; and that this harmony with God and with his Christ is not the means of salvation only, but salvation itself. Unitarianism alone receives the spiritual view of Christ that the kingdom of Heaven is within us; and works not for outward wages, but to make the inward soul a holy temple for the Spirit of God; that through its purified affections Jesus, our best type of Heaven, may shed his own peace, and that he and his Father may be able to love us, and come unto us, and make their abode with us. Now you are aware that this qualifying of ourselves for Heaven through heavenly frames of mind, is so prominent a part of our faith, that it is actually converted into a charge against us. I heard the Unitarians charged with a want of gospel humility for regarding holy affections and a Christ-like life as the substance of the hope of Heaven; and I thought on the words of the Apostle—"The kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy

Spirit."* This is not the salvation so loudly vaunted by Trinitarianism. It assigns another office to Christ than that of leading men to God through a resemblance to himself. Jesus stands to Trinitarians not principally as the Inspirer of virtue, the quickener of holiest affections, the guide of the heaven-bound spirit; but as bearing on his own person the punishment due to their sins, and as performing in his own person the righteousness that is imputed to them, and being transferred, by an act of faith, makes good their claim to Heaven. Now these notions of Heaven regard it as so much property, which one person may purchase and transfer to another. Christ, by an act of self-sacrifice, becomes the purchaser of Heaven, and gives a right of settlement in the blessed land to every one who consents to regard his death as a substitution for his own punishment, and his righteousness as a substitution for his own virtues. There is no flattering unction that could be laid to the soul, no drug to stupify its life, that could more thoroughly turn it away from the spiritual purposes of Jesus.† He lived that men might know their own nature, and work out its glory for themselves. He lived that he might rescue that nature from low views of its duties and its powers, by showing humanity in the image of God. He bore his cross that men might look to Calvary and behold the moral heroism of the meekest heart when it trusts in God; with what serenity a filial faith can pass through the vicissitudes of severest trial, and take the cup from the hand of a Father, though he presents it from out the darkest cloud of his providence. He died, because Death crossed his path of Duty, and not to turn aside was part of his loyalty to the Spirit of Truth, "for this cause was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth;"—he died that earth and heaven might unite their influences on the human soul treading an uninterrupted path to God, that its light might come from beyond the

* Rom. xiv. 17. † Note.

grave, and its hope from the peace of a world that is never troubled; and yet, alas! for the perversion—men are found to stand beneath the cross, and so far to mistake the spirit of the celestial sufferer, as to appropriate, to transfer to themselves, by an act of faith, its moral character, and to call themselves the redeemed of Christ. Surely there is a "practical importance" in the Unitarian controversy, if it warns men against these notions of substitution, these unspiritual views of Heaven and Christ. The worst of all delusions is that which turns us away from inward holiness, inward qualifications for Heaven, and holds out to our too-ready grasp some foreign, some adventitious, and extrinsic hope. It is right that we should rely on God, for his strength is our strength, and his mercy *our* supporting hope; it is right that we should love and look unto Jesus, for his influences are our spiritual wealth, and his path our bright and beaming way;—but where in Heaven or earth are we to rest at last, but in what God and Christ do for us, in the formed character of our own souls?

And now shall I be told, that this is claiming Heaven on the ground of our own merits? And how often shall we have to repel that false accusation? If by this is meant, that we deem our virtues to be *deserving* of Heaven, the charge of insanity might as well be laid against us, as that infinite presumption; but if it is meant that, to a holy spirit, and to a holy life, to a supreme love for the Right, the True, the Good, *and to these alone,* God, with a love that is infinite, has attached something of the blessedness of his own nature;—then we do hold this as the first and brightest of Truths, the very substance of the Gospel, the sublimest lesson of the Saviour's life, shadowed by his death, only to be authenticated and glorified by his resurrection and ascension. I know of nothing so deeply sad as to witness the ministers of Christ appealing for support to the lowest parts of human nature—the fishers of men casting out their nets, that they may take into

the drag the most selfish passions and fears—bribing over to their side the terrors and the weaknesses, to which, except through penitence and restoration, Unitarian Christianity dare not offer peace. Trinitarianism will not deal so justly and so strictly with sin. We are speaking of its tendencies; not of the forms it sometimes, nay we will say often, assumes in the higher and purer order of minds. It is true to the weaknesses of men; but false to their strength. It seems to many to save them *in* their low condition, not *from* it. It will not meet the soul, and tell it that there is no substitute for holiness, and that to move guilt from its punishment would be to move God from his throne. It takes that guilty soul, and instead of dealing with it truly, cleansing from sin, and pouring in the spirit of the life of Christ, leans it against the Atoning Sacrifice, and the Righteousness that cometh by imputation, an unhallowed and unnatural alliance, to make that glorious virtue an easy retreat for guilt, and the holy Jesus a 'Minister of Sin.'* "They have healed the hurt of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, where there is no peace." †

And if we value Unitarianism for what we feel to be the efficacy of its views in regard to the offices of Christ, we value it even more, for its views of God, and for the connexions it gives us with his spirit. Piety is the noblest distinction, the richest happiness, the purest fountain of the soul; and we love, without measure, the faith that nurtures it most strongly. We feel our affections to be drawn towards one God and Father with a singleness and intensity, that we believe would be impossible, if the heart was to be distributed among three objects, or distracted by a confused conception of a tripersonal God. We boast an undivided worship, and an undivided Temple, where all the soul's devotion centres upon one Father. His spirit was with us when we knew not the power that was exciting our irrepressible joy; and

* Gal. ii. 17. † Note.

though He has led us through his ways of discipline, we knew it was the same hand that had guided our early steps; He has met our souls when they were abroad through Nature, and touched them with his breathing Spirit; He has pursued us into our solitudes, and, in our more solemn moments of penitence and suffering, He has made us to see light in darkness, mercy in trial, and to drink of the deepest fountains of life; His compassion has mercifully cooled the burning shame of our guiltiest confessions, and saved us through fear and weakness by heavenly hope; His peace has descended upon all our aspirations, and shielded their feebleness from blight and death;—and, throughout this varied experience, there was but one voice speaking to the heart; the pressure of one hand on the pulses of life; one God revealing himself to the spirits of his children. Whatever is delightful in the Universe, whatever is pure in earthly joy, whatever is touching in Jesus, whatever is profoundly peaceful in a holy spirit, are to us the splendours of one God, the gifts of one Father; bonds upon the heart, uniting it to one spiritual and everlasting Friend. We do not profess that our Piety has glowed with the intensity of these mingling fires, but we feel that there is a power of motive drawing us to the love of one God, which no other Theology may lay claim to.

But the "practical importance" of our views of God consists not merely in that Unity of being, through which all the devotion of the soul is poured into one central affection; it affects also the unity of his Character, the moral perfections of the source of Piety. We reject that faith which represents the moral government of God as a system of favouritism. We meet with nothing in nature to impeach the Impartiality of our Heavenly Father. We believe that the same God who sends his sun and his rain upon the evil and upon the just, is willing to shed the dew of his blessing upon the hearts of all his children. We rejoice to overlook the vain and perishable distinctions of time; to believe that all the human family,

partakers of one spirit, meet in the love of the universal Father; that God in heaven is no respecter of persons; and that the humblest and most neglected of his children may rise into hallowed intercourse with the infinite spirit. We protest with a strong abhorrence against the dreadful views which are given of the God's inability to forgive, of the Justice of the Father horribly satisfied by the substitution of the innocent for the sins of the guilty. We profess to have no hope either in time or in eternity, but in the unclouded goodness of Him who sitteth on Heaven's throne and reigneth over all—and if these things may be, and yet God be good, it is a goodness we do not understand and cannot calculate upon, and the pillars of our faith are shaken in all the reliances of futurity. We do not enter now into the scriptural evidence for or against these doctrines—that will be done in other parts of this course; our present concern is with the question, which of these views is the most calculated to nourish piety, to kindle within us a warm, unselfish, and intelligible love of God. We meet in the world the children of one Parent, with the same souls, the same hopes, the same capacities for joy; with the same God to comfort their sorrows and to guard their happiness; breathing on them the same holy and inspiring influences; leading them to the same Saviour, and beckoning them to the same Heaven; and our love for God and our fellowship with man thus mingle intimately in the same heart and shed through it the serene and blissful light of a full, radiant, and unclouded Piety. The spiritual influences of Unitarianism thus lead to a supreme love and veneration for God by exhibiting the Holiness, the Forgivingness, and the all embracing Impartiality of the Divine Character, without a stain upon their brightness and their purity.

We believe that there is in the spirit of these views a peculiar power to excite an interest in the souls of our brethren; to give an expansive spirit of humanity; to make us feel that we are bound by the holiest of ties; united in the

purposes of one Father; children of the same God, and educating for the same destinies. Wherever we cast our eyes they fall upon God's everlasting ones. In the humblest we see the future immortal; and in the proudest we can see no more. We believe that God made every living soul that it might become pure, virtuous and blessed; we believe that his eye of watchful care is never removed from it; we believe that He never abandons it, that He accompanies it in all its wanderings, and that He will ultimately lead it by his own awful yet merciful discipline, in this world or in the next, in safety to Himself—and we dare not to scorn the spirit which God is tending and which He purposes ultimately to save.

And with this belief at our hearts, we wonder that there is not more heroism in the cause of the human soul; we wonder that the noblest of all philanthropy, that which seeks the realization of Christian states of character, is so rare among men; that there is so little of a strong and yearning love drawing us towards sinning and suffering man; that souls are permitted to slumber and die without an awakening voice; that our hearts are not stirred within us when we look to the awful and neglected wastes of human ignorance and sin, and reflect that through each guilty bosom, and each polluted home there might breathe the purity and the peace of Christ. We despair of none. We believe that the guiltiest may be turned from their iniquities and saved. We believe that God works by human means and expects our aid. We believe that the fire of heaven is still smouldering, and that a spark might light it into undying flame; and we are sure that the end of this faith is love unwearied, which ought to assume more earnest forms of interest for our nature, and to vent itself in purer efforts for its highest good. Others may defend themselves by casting the whole burden upon God; may point in despair to the hopeless condition of man's heart; wait for fire from heaven to come down and stir the sinner's

soul; and having thus "looked upon" the moral sufferer may pass by upon the other side; but *with us* there is but one duty; to go to him, to pour the spirit of Jesus into his wounded heart, to lay upon ourselves his burdens, and to toil for his restitution as a brother immortal. The "practical importance," then, of Unitarianism as contrasted with Trinitarianism is in this—that it tends to penetrate our hearts with a deeper spirit of Christian love; to give us hope and interest in our nature; to call out the highest efforts of the spirit of humanity; and to supply us with lofty motive for emulating the self-sacrifice of Jesus.

We think, further, that in our views of God, of Christ, and of human nature, we have a peculiar encouragement for the personal virtues, a peculiar demand for individual holiness. We have already alluded to the force and distinctness with which we teach that the greatest work of Christ is in giving inward power, strength of purpose to the soul; and that there is no salvation except where the purity, the freedom, and the love of Heaven are growing in the heaven-bound heart; but we also recognize peculiar claims *upon us* in the conviction which we hold so sacred that our righteous Father has created us with a nature capable of knowing and of doing His Will. Others may cast the odium of human sins upon human inability, and thus at last throw down their burdens at the door of their God; but as for *us*, we can only bow our heads in sorrow and ask the forgiveness of Heaven. We believe that God has united us by no necessity with sin; we deny altogether the incapacity of man to do the will of God; we feel that there are energies within us which, if but called out into the living strife, would overcome all the resistance of temptation; we hear a deep voice issuing from the soul and witnessed to by Christ, calling us to holiness and promising us peace;—and with God's seal thus set upon our nature, and God's voice thus calling to the kindred spirit

within, why are we not found farther upon the path of Christ, and brightening unto the perfect man?

For, alas! there is not only energy and holy motive in this lofty conviction, there are also the elements of a true and deep humility. If the glory of our souls is marred it is our own work. If the spirit of God is quenched within us, we have ourselves extinguished it. If we have gained but little advancement upon Heaven's way, we have wasted and misdirected immortal powers. Elevation of purpose, and true humility of mind, the humility that looks upwards to Christ and God, and bows in shame, are thus brought together in the Unitarian's faith, as they are by no other form of Christianity. I know it is said, with a strange blindness, that this doctrine of the incapacity of man to know and do the will of God is rejected by Unitarianism because it rebukes our pride; but no—it suffers man to be a sinner without hurting his pride; it transfers the disgrace from the individual to the race; and that, on the other hand, is the humbling picture which represents our sins not of our inheritance but of our choice, the voluntary agent of evil degrading a spirit made in the image of God, pouring the burning waters of corruption into a frail though noble nature, until the crystal vessel is stained and shattered. "Preach unto me smooth things, and prophecy deceits," is the demand of the less spiritual parts of man, and Trinitarianism is certainly the Preacher whose views of sin fall softly on enervated souls.

We cannot conclude without alluding, however generally, to the practical importance of our views of the future life. We believe that the fitness of the soul for Heaven, its oneness with God and Christ, will form the measure of its joy; and that the thousand varieties of goodness will each be consigned to its appropriate place in the allotments of happiness. We believe that the glory of Heaven will brighten for ever as the character is perfected under the influences of Heaven,

and that to this growing excellence there is no limit or end. We believe that even in the future there is discipline for the soul; that even for the guiltiest there may be processes of redemption; and that the stained spirit may be cleansed as by fire. We believe that this view of a strict and graduated retribution exerts a more quickening, personal, realizing power than that of Eternal torments which no *heart* believes, which no man trembles to conceive; where the iniquity which is to be visited with such an awful punishment becomes *a shifting line* which every sinner moves beyond himself; until Heaven itself is profaned, and all its sacredness violated and encroached upon by those who feel that it would be infinite injustice to plunge *them* into an Eternity so unutterably dreadful, but who have been taught to believe that to escape this Hell is to be sure of Heaven.

Now our present objection to this doctrine of eternal punishment is the practical one that it has no moral power. It does not come close enough to truth and justice to take a hold upon the conscience, and so instead of binding and constraining, it is inoperative and lax. The fact is, it is not practically believed. It is too monstrous to be realized. Where, we ask, are the fruits of this appalling doctrine, which is everywhere preached? One would suppose that its dreadfulness would keep the tempted spirit in constant alarm. I know that it occasions misery to the timid, to the sensitive, to the feeble of nerve, that is just to those who require the purer and gentler influences of religion to give them trust in God: but what sinner has it alarmed? what guilty heart has it made curdle with terror? what seared conscience has been scared from evil by the shriek of woe coming up from the depths of the everlasting torture? No; these are not the influences that convert sin. They are not believed or realized, and yet they displace from the thoughts those definite views of the future which would have power to move and save the soul. The righteous allotments with which God will award the joys and sorrows of

the future; the character of the individual mind when it first appears for judgment; the value of every moment of present time in assigning us our first station in immortality; the exact righteousness in which every variety of character shall have its graduated place on the scale of recompense; the appalling thought of every separate spirit standing before God just as the last effort of convulsed nature dismissed it from the body; —the trifler in his levity, the drunkard with his idiot look, the murderer with the blood-stains on his soul—and the sainted spirit passing on the breath of prayer from the outer to the inner Court of God's presence;—these, the solemn distinctions of that awful world, are all lost, because of that common Hell into whose abyss unawed Conscience hurls her fears, and then forgets the infinite gradations of punishment that still remain to pour dread recompense on evil at the award of a retributive God.

There are some objections urged against these views of the practical importance of Unitarianism to which I must now give brief and emphatic answer.

1. It is said that Unitarianism generates no love to Christ: and the reason assigned is, that as we reject the primal curse of original sin, we have not so much to be forgiven, and consequently not equal obligation to love; for to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. Now in our view forgiveness is of God, in whom Trinitarians find no forgiveness, and Christ is the image of our Father in Heaven, and we love *him* who leads us into that pure and blissful presence, and in whose face we have the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, full of grace and truth. We love Jesus for what he is to our souls, and not for the theological fiction, that he took off a disqualification which our God laid on. We love all holy and good beings for the same reasons, that they strengthen in our own nature the springs of goodness and unselfish love, and lift us into fellowship with themselves; and therefore we love God supremely, *and next to God, him* who through self-

devotion and perfect filial trust preserved the moral lineaments of Heaven, of a mind harmonized with providence, against the weaknesses and through the temptations of this humanity, whose tremblings we know so well, and whose fallings away in ourselves from the higher impulses of God, have taught us the love of veneration for him who made it bear the likeness of Heaven, and, through its trials and its shrinkings, realized perfection. The moral estimate that would proportion our love to Christ, not to his own fitness to inspire love, to the heavenly benevolence that breathed through his own life and death, but to the selfish measure of the outward benefits received, can be equalled in the confusion and impurity of its moral ideas only by another moral judgment pronounced upon the same occasion—that the guilt of the Jews, when they crucified Jesus, must be estimated and measured in proportion as Jesus was man or God. This certainly is quite consistent with the Trinitarian scheme, that guilt can be contracted unknowingly; but who will set right this utter ignorance of the primitive ideas of morality? What spectres of the thirteenth century rise before us when we listen to these conceptions—of God dying under the hands of his creatures; and of their guilt, by some process, (not moral, but metaphysical,) becoming infinite because the sufferer was infinite, though they knew it not, and believed themselves to be crucifying the man Jesus! It is only further proof that the Atonement and its allied ideas tends to confuse in the minds that receive it the fundamental perceptions of Right and Wrong.*

2. It is said that Unitarianism leads to infidelity: and the proof assigned is that those whom Trinitarianism makes sceptics, find with us ideas of Christ and Christianity with which they have sympathies. We intercept the minds whom they have driven from Belief; we present our serene and perfect image of Duty and of God to minds wearied and perplexed

* Note.

with views of Religion which are felt to be too coarse for their own nature and therefore infinitely unworthy of the spirit of God; but because they leave the Church, that Christian Jerusalem, and come to sit at the feet of Jesus in our humble Bethany, where at least he is loved purely and for himself;—then this is Infidelity, and we who stay the wanderer, and retain him within the fold, are called producers of unbelief. The spirit of Jesus said, "he that is not against us is for us." The spirit of Trinitarianism says, "he that is not for us is against us." It was said that the spirit of infidelity is the spirit of this age. I only ask, if this is so, could there be a more practical condemnation of that system, and of that Church, which sways all the religious influences of the country; and whose representations of Christ and of Christianity, the universally prevailing ones, have produced the religious character of these times? If there is Infidelity in the land, it is mainly the recoil from Orthodoxy.*

3. It is said that Unitarianism encourages the pride of human Reason. Now I shall answer this very briefly, because any lengthened exposure would necessarily take the form of sarcasm. Whose Reason is it that we oppose when we reject Trinitarianism? Trinitarians say that it is the Reason of God. But how do they know this? Because they are sure that *they* know the Mind of God as it is revealed in the Scriptures; and they are sure that *we* are in error. Infallibility again! So that to oppose *their* interpretation of the Scriptures, is to set up our own Reason against the Reason of God. Now I ask, in all simplicity, Can they who say these things have taken the trouble to clear their own ideas? If there is any pride of Reason, on which side does it lie? They first identify their own sense of the Scriptures with God's sense, and then they charge other men with the pride of Reason, for not bowing down their minds to God, having first taken it for granted that *their* Reason and God's Reason are one and the same.

* Note.

Look again to the uncertain doctrines which they deduce from the Scriptures by processes of inference, sometimes technical and sometimes mystical, and say, does the world afford a more marked exemplification of the pride of human Reason, than the absolute confidence with which these doubtful conclusions are received, and not only that, but pressed upon men, as the exact meaning of God, at the peril of their eternal Salvation? What do these divines rest upon when they deduce from the Scriptures their essentials of Christianity? Their own reasonings. And yet they will tell you, that to differ from *them*, is to oppose your own Reason to the mind of God. I ask, hereafter in this controversy, Should not this matter of the pride of human reason be a weapon of attack in our hands, an accusation against Trinitarians, instead of a charge which Unitarians are to answer? We have too long, in this and many other matters, stood upon the defensive.*

And now, in conclusion, let me say once more, that though we think Trinitarian views of man's connexions with God injurious to Christian perfection, inasmuch as they throw the minds which receive them out of harmony with the realities of God, and must therefore undergo future correction and readjustment, still our strongest objection to the Trinitarian scheme is the fundamental one that it is based upon principles of exclusiveness, upon the indispensable conditions of a narrow and technical creed, and that thus it is the parent and fomenter of all those dissensions and practical evils in religion which these times witness and deplore. How many has orthodoxy persecuted into a hatred for the very name of religion? In how many minds has it darkened, or mixed up with the most incongruous associations, the beautiful image of Christ, destroying its healing and persuasive power? O! why should it be, except for this Trinitarian scheme of an Exclusive Salvation, that Religion should be directing her whole energies to the support of creeds, instead of going

* Note.

about doing good, and with her heavenly spirit entering into conflict with the moral evils that afflict society, and degrade man, and rebel against God? Why is it, that instead of this, we have a distinct class of sufferings, that go under the name of religious evils? Why is it that we are here holding controversy with our fellow Christians, instead of uniting our spirit and our strength to work the works of Christ? We wage not this controversy for the purpose of aiding a sect; but we wage it, to do what we can to expose and put down universally the sectarian spirit. The great evils of society, the crying wrongs of Man, are mainly owing to this diversion of Religion from spiritual and practical objects to the strife of tongues and Salvation by creeds. What is the Religion of this country doing? Contending for creeds. What ought it to be doing? Spreading the spirit of the life of Christ through the hearts of men and the institutions of society. How long are these things to be? How long are the spiritual influences of this country to be all consumed in striving with heresies instead of striving with sins; leaving untouched the bad heart of society, whilst wrangling for a metaphysical faith? Look to the religious apparatus of this country. Look to the number of pulpits that should send forth the spiritual influences of righteousness and peace; and the number of men that should move through society apostles of the beneficence of Christ.

Suppose all this strength directed to practical and spiritual objects, and could the things that are, remain as they are, if the religious forces of the country instead of being exclusive, doctrinal, controversial, were full of the love of Jesus, and sought simply to establish the kingdom of Heaven upon Earth? Could Religion excite the angry passions that she does, if her aims were spiritual and not doctrinal? Could Religion be divorced as she is from practical life, and confined to a class kept under powerful stimulants, and called the "religious public," if her aims were spiritual and not doctri-

nal? Could Religion leave the people neglected and without education, practical Heathens, while she is settling her creeds, if her aims were spiritual and not doctrinal? Could Religion have left unpurified the streams and sources of public morality, if her aims were spiritual and not doctrinal? Could she have suffered War still to disgrace the world, and not long since have extinguished the Earthborn passion by the Heavenly spirit and the moral instrument, if the direction of her energies had been spiritual and not controversial? Could she have shown so little interest in the great mass of the people? Could she have abandoned them to ignorance and grinding oppressions and not raised her omnipotent voice on their behalf? Could she have so separated herself from the real business of life and left the moralities of intercourse unsanctified whilst she remained unsympathizing and cloistered? Every friend to practical religion has an interest in destroying this exclusive Theology, which turns away from the works of love to the war of creeds.

If then we preach Unitarianism, it is that we may win men's hearts to the one Spirit who pervades all things, and harmonizes all things, and sends all blessings, and sanctifies all thoughts, all duties, and all times. If we preach the man Christ Jesus, the word made flesh, it is that we too may sanctify our nature, and make it a temple for the living God, and grow up into him in all things who is our head even Christ. If we preach Salvation, not by creeds, but by the spirit of Christ in us, the hope of glory, it is that our fitness for Heaven may commence on Earth; that we may live now as those who when they have slept the brief sleep of death shall awake in the presence of Christ and God, and find themselves in that Heaven wherein dwelleth righteousness. And if we preach not indiscriminate happiness and indiscriminate tortures in futurity, but the just retributions of God, it is that we may redeem the time, remembering that each moment lost throws us back on the heavenly way, that there is an in-

finite perfection before us, providing work for our infinite capacities through an immortal life; that God is faithful and inflexible in his retributions; that no virtue shall be without its reward, no sin without its woe; that we shall be judged according to our works, and reap what we have sown.

To sum up, the two great principles of Unitarianism are these:—

I. Spiritual allegiance to Christ as the image of God. "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

II. Spiritual Liberty from ought besides; Creeds, Traditions, Rituals, or Priests. "False brethren, unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you."

APPENDIX.

Note 1, page 14.

"The free and unprejudiced mind dwells with delight on the image of the universal church or convocation of Christ, as it would naturally have grown 'into the fulness of the body' of its glorious founder * * * *

"And what (let me earnestly and solemnly ask) has hitherto turned this view into a mocking dream,—a dream that deludes by images which are the very reverse of the sad realities which surround us? ORTHODOXY; —the notion that the eternal happiness or misery of individuals is intimately connected with the acceptance or rejection of a most obscure system of metaphysics; a system perplexing in the extreme to those who are best acquainted with its former technical, now obsolete language, and perfectly unintelligible to the rest of the Christian world; a system which, to say the least, *seems* to contradict the simplest and most primitive notions of the human mind concerning the unity, the justice, and the goodness of the Supreme Being; a system which, if it be contained in the Scriptures, has been laid under so thick and impenetrable a veil, that thousands who have sought to discover it, with the most eager desire of finding it, whose happiness in this world would have been greatly increased by that discovery, and who, at all events, would have escaped much misery had they been able to attest it, even on the grounds of probability sufficient to acquit themselves before their own conscience, have been compelled, by truth, to confess their want of success. Yet Orthodoxy declares this very system identical with Christianity—with that Gospel which was 'preached to the poor,' and 'revealed unto babes:' such a system, we are told, is that faith which, '*except every one keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.*'"—*Heresy and Orthodoxy by Rev. J. Blanco White.*

NOTE 2, page 18.

"What do divines understand by *Christian Truth*? The answer at first, appears obvious. 'Christian truth (it will be said) is what Christ and his apostles knew and taught concerning Salvation under the Gospel.' Thus far we find no difficulty; but (let me ask, again) where does this exist as an object *external* to our minds? The answer appears no less obvious than the former: 'In the Bible.' Still I must ask, Is the MATERIAL Bible the Christian truth about which Christians dispute? No: it will be readily said not the MATERIAL Bible, but the SENSE of the Bible. Now (I beg to know) is the SENSE of the Bible an object *external* to our minds? Does any *Sense* of the Bible, accessible to man, exist anywhere but in the mind of each man who receives it from the words he reads? The Divine mind certainly knows in what sense those words were used; but as we cannot compare our mental impressions with that model and original of all truth, it is clear that by the SENSE of the Bible we must mean our own sense of its meaning. When therefore any man declares his intention to defend *Christian truth*, he only expresses his determination to defend his *own notions*, as produced by the words of the Bible. No other *Christian truth* exists for us in our present state."—*Heresy and Orthodoxy*.

NOTE 3, page 22.

"If different men in carefully and conscientiously examining the Scriptures, should arrive at different conclusions, even on points of the last importance, we trust that God, who alone knows what every man is capable of, will be merciful to him that is in error. We trust that He will pardon the Unitarian, if he be in error, because he has fallen into it from the dread of becoming an idolater—of giving that glory to another which he conceives to be due to God alone. If the worshipper of Jesus Christ be in error, we trust that God will pardon his mistake, because he has fallen into it from the dread of disobeying what he conceives to be revealed concerning the nature of the Son, or commanded concerning the honour to be given him. Both are actuated by the same principle—the fear of God; and though that principle impels them into different roads, it is our hope and belief, that if they add to their faith *charity*, they will meet in Heaven."—*Tillotson*.

"We should learn to be cautious, lest we *charge God foolishly*, by ascribing that to him, or the Nature he has given us, which is owing wholly to our own abuse of it. Men may speak of the degeneracy and corruption of the world, according to the experience they have had of it; but human nature, considered as the divine workmanship, should, methinks, be treated as sacred: for *in the image of God made he man.*"—*Bishop Butler.*

Note 4, page 23.

"But, if Orthodoxy cannot be the principle of union among *Christians*, upon what are men to agree in order to belong to the Convocation, or people of Christ? I believe that the Apostle Paul has said enough to answer this question. When by using the word *anathema*, he rejects from his spiritual society even an angel from Heaven, were it possible that such a being should "preach another gospel," he lays down the only principle, without which there can be no communion among Christians. Unhappily the word Gospel, like the word Faith, is constantly understood, as expressing a certain number of dogmatical articles. Owing to this perversion of the original meaning, these very passages of Paul are conceived to support the long-established notion that Orthodoxy is the only condition of Christian communion; and want of it, a sufficient cause for *anathema*. I have, however, already proved, that Orthodoxy, without a supreme judge of religious opinions, is a phantom; and since it is demonstrable that no such judge has been appointed, it clearly follows that the Apostle Paul, by the name of *Gospel*, could not mean a string of dogmatic assertions. It is necessary, therefore, to ascend to the original signification of the word Gospel, if we are not to misunderstand the reason of the anathema pronounced by Paul. Let such as wish to rise above the clouds of theological prejudice, remember that the whole mystery of godliness is described by the expression 'glad tidings.' *Sad*, not glad tidings, indeed, would have been the Apostles' preaching, if they had announced a salvation depending on *Orthodoxy*, for (as I have said before) it would have been a salvation depending on chance. But salvation promised on condition of a change of mind from the love of sin to the love of God, (which is *repentance*); on a surrender of the individual will to the will of God, according to the view of that divine will which is obtained by trust in Christ's example and teaching, which is *faith*; a pardon of sins independent of harassing religious practices,

sacrifices, and ascetic privations—these were 'glad tidings of great joy,' indeed, to all who, caring for their souls, felt bewildered between atheism and superstition."—*Heresy and Orthodoxy.*

NOTE 5, page 27.

"Men want an object of worship like themselves, and the great secret of idolatry lies in this propensity. A God, clothed in our form, and feeling our wants and sorrows, speaks to our weak nature more strongly than a Father in Heaven, a pure spirit, invisible and unapproachable, save by the reflecting and purified mind. We think too, that the peculiar offices ascribed to Jesus by the popular theology, make him the most attractive person in the Godhead. The Father is the depositary of the justice, the vindicator of the rights, the avenger of the laws of the Divinity. On the other hand, the Son, the brightness of the divine mercy, stands between the incensed Deity and guilty humanity, exposes his meek head to the storms, and his compassionate breast to the sword of the divine justice, bears our whole load of punishment, and purchases with his blood every blessing which descends from Heaven. Need we state the effect of these representations, especially on common minds, for whom Christianity was chiefly designed, and whom it seeks to bring to the Father as the loveliest being? We do believe, that the worship of a bleeding, suffering God, tends strongly to absorb the mind, and to draw it from other objects, just as the human tenderness of the Virgin Mary has given her so conspicuous a place in the devotions of the Church of Rome. We believe too, that this worship though attractive, is not most fitted to spiritualize the mind, that it awakens human transports, rather than that deep veneration of the moral perfections of God, which is the essence of piety.

"We are told, also, that Christ is a more interesting object, that his love and mercy are more felt, when he is viewed as the Supreme God, who left his glory to take humanity and to suffer for men. That Trinitarians are strongly moved by this representation, we do not mean to deny; but we think their emotions altogether founded on a misapprehension of their own doctrines. They talk of the second person of the Trinity's leaving his glory and his Father's bosom to visit and save the world. But this second person being the unchangeable and infinite God, was evidently incapable of parting with the least degree of his perfection and felicity. At the moment of his taking flesh, he was as intimately present with his Father as

before, and equally with his Father filled heaven, and earth, and immensity. This Trinitarians acknowledge; and still they profess to be touched and overwhelmed by the amazing humiliation of this immutable being! But not only does their doctrine, when fully explained, reduce Christ's humiliation to a fiction, it almost wholly destroys the impressions with which his cross ought to be viewed. According to their doctrine, Christ was, comparatively, no sufferer at all. It is true his human mind suffered; but this, they tell us, was an infinitely small part of Jesus, bearing no more proportion to his whole nature, than a single hair of our heads to the whole body, or than a drop to the ocean. The divine mind of Christ, that which was most properly himself, was infinitely happy, at the very moment of the suffering of his humanity; whilst hanging on the cross, he was the happiest being in the universe, as happy as the infinite Father; so that his pains, compared with his felicity, were nothing. This Trinitarians do, and must acknowledge. It follows necessarily from the immutableness of the divine nature, which they ascribe to Christ; so that their system justly viewed, robs his death of interest, weakens our sympathy with his sufferings, and is, of all others, most unfavourable to a love of Christ, founded on a sense of his sacrifices for mankind. We esteem our own views to be vastly more affecting. It is our belief, that Christ's humiliation was real and entire, that the whole Saviour and not a part of him suffered, that his crucifixion was a scene of deep and unmixed agony. As we stand round his cross, our minds are not distracted, nor our sensibility weakened by contemplating him as composed of incongruous and infinitely differing minds, and as having a balance of infinite felicity. We recognise in the dying Jesus but one mind. This, we think, renders his sufferings, and his patience, and love, in bearing them, incomparably more impressive and affecting, than the system we oppose."—*Channing*.

Note 6, Page 29.

"We believe too, that this system is unfavourable to the character. It naturally leads men to think, that Christ came to change God's mind, rather than their own; that the highest object of his mission, was to avert punishment rather than to communicate holiness; and that a large part of religion consists in disparaging good works and human virtue, for the purpose of magnifying the value of Christ's vicarious sufferings. In this way, a sense of the infinite importance and indispensable necessity of personal improvement is

weakened, and high sounding praises of Christ's cross seem often to be substituted for obedience to his precepts. For ourselves, we have not so learned Jesus. Whilst we gratefully acknowledge, that he came to rescue us from punishment, we believe, that he was sent on a still nobler errand, namely, to deliver us from sin itself, and to form us to a sublime and heavenly virtue. We regard him as a Saviour, chiefly as he is the light, physician, and guide of the dark, diseased, and wandering mind. No influence in the universe seems to us so glorious as that over the character; and no redemption so worthy of thankfulness as the restoration of the soul to purity. Without this, pardon, if it were possible, would be of little value. Why pluck the sinner from hell, if a hell be left to burn in his own breast? Why raise him to heaven, if he remain a stranger to its sanctity and love? With these impressions, we are accustomed to value the gospel chiefly, as it abounds in effectual aids, motives, excitements to a generous and divine virtue. In this virtue as in a common centre, we see all its doctrines, precepts, promises meet; and we believe, that faith in this religion is of no worth, and contributes nothing to salvation, any further than as it uses these doctrines, precepts, promises, and the whole life, character, sufferings and triumphs of Jesus, as the means of purifying the mind, of changing it into the likeness of his celestial excellence."—*Channing*.

Note 7, page 37.

"I can direct you to nothing in Christ more important than his tried, and victorious, and perfect goodness. Others may love Christ for his mysterious attributes; I love him for the rectitude of his soul and life. I love him for that benevolence which went through Judea, instructing the ignorant, healing the sick, giving sight to the blind. I love him for that universal charity, which comprehended the despised publican, the hated Samaritan, the benighted heathen, and sought to bring a world to God and to happiness. I love him for that gentle, mild, forbearing spirit, which no insult, outrage, injury could overpower; and which desired as earnestly the repentance and happiness of its foes as the happiness of its friends. I love him for the spirit of magnanimity, constancy, and fearless rectitude with which, amid peril and opposition, he devoted himself to the work which God gave him to do. I love him for the wise and enlightened zeal with which he espoused the true, the spiritual interests of mankind, and through which he lived and died to redeem them from

every sin, to frame them after his own God-like virtue. I love him, I have said, for his moral excellence; I know nothing else to love. I know nothing so glorious in the Creator or his creatures. This is the greatest gift which God bestows, the greatest to be derived from his Son. You see why I call you to cherish the love of Christ. This love I do not recommend as a luxury of feeling, as an exstasy bringing immediate and overflowing joy. I view it in a nobler light; I call you to love Jesus, that you may bring yourselves into contact and communion with perfect virtue, and may become what you love. I know no sincere, enduring good, but the moral excellence that shines forth in Jesus Christ. Your health, your outward comforts and distinctions, are poor, mean, contemptible, compared with this; and to prefer them to this is self-debasement, self-destruction. May this great truth penetrate our souls; and may we bear witness in our common lives, and especially in trial, in sore temptation, that nothing is so dear to us as the virtue of Christ! * * *

"Thus Jesus lived with men; with the consciousness of unutterable majesty he joined a lowliness, gentleness, humanity, and sympathy, which have no example in human history. I ask you to contemplate this wonderful union. In proportion to the superiority of Jesus to all around him was the intimacy, the brotherly love, with which he bound himself to them. I maintain, that this is a character wholly remote from human conception. To imagine it to be the production of imposture or enthusiasm, shows a strange unsoundness of mind. I contemplate it with a veneration second only to the profound awe with which I look up to God. It bears no mark of human invention. It was real. It belonged to, and it manifested, the beloved Son of God.

"But I have not done. May I ask your attention a few moments more? We have not yet reached the depth of Christ's character. We have not touched the great principle on which his wonderful sympathy was founded, and which endeared him to his office of universal Saviour. Do you ask what this deep principle was? I answer, it was his conviction of the greatness of the human soul. He saw in man the impress and image of the Divinity, and therefore thirsted for his redemption; and took the tenderest interest in him, whatever might be the rank, character, or condition in which he was found. This spiritual view of man pervades and distinguishes the teaching of Christ. Jesus looked on men with an eye which pierced beneath the material frame. The body vanished before him. The trappings of

the rich, the rags of the poor, were nothing to him. He looked through them, as though they did not exist, to the soul; and there, amidst clouds of ignorance and plague-spots of sin, he recognized a spiritual and immortal nature, and the germs of power and perfection which might be unfolded for ever. In the most fallen and depraved man, he saw a being who might become an angel of light. Still more, he felt that there was nothing in himself to which men might not ascend. His own lofty consciousness did not sever him from the multitude; for he saw, in his own greatness, the model of what men might become. So deeply was he thus impressed, that again and again, in speaking of his future glories, he announced that in these his true followers were to share. They were to sit on his throne, and partake of his beneficent power. Here I pause; and I know not, indeed, what can be added to heighten the wonder, reverence, and love which are due to Jesus. When I consider him not only as possessed with the consciousness of an unexampled and unbounded majesty, but as recognizing a kindred nature in all human beings, and living and dying to raise them to an anticipation of his divine glories; and when I see him, under these views, allying himself to men by the tenderest ties, embracing them with a spirit of humanity, which no insult, injury, or pain could for a moment repel or overpower, I am filled with wonder, as well as reverence and love. I feel that this character is not of human invention, that it was not assumed through fraud, or struck out by enthusiasm; for it is infinitely above their reach. When I add this character of Jesus to the other evidences of his religion, it gives to what before seemed so strong a new and vast accession of strength; I feel as if I could not be deceived. The Gospels must be true; they were drawn from a living original; they were founded on reality. The character of Christ is not fiction; he was what he claimed to be, and what his followers attested. Nor is this all. Jesus not only *was*, he is still, the Son of God,—the Saviour of the world. He exists now; he has entered that Heaven to which he always looked forward on earth. There he lives and reigns. With a clear, calm faith, I see him in that state of glory; and I confidently expect, at no distant period, to see him face to face. We have, indeed, no absent friend whom we shall so surely meet. Let us then, by imitations of his virtues, and obedience to his word, prepare ourselves to join him in those pure mansions where he is surrounding himself with the good and pure of our race, and will communicate to them for ever his own spirit, power, and joy."—*Channing*.

NOTE 8, page 38.

"At the present moment I would ask, whether it is a vice to doubt the truth of Christianity as it is manifested in Spain and Portugal. When a patriot in those benighted countries, who knows Christianity only as a bulwark of despotism, as a rearer of inquisitions, as a stern jailer immuring wretched women in the convent, as an executioner stained and reeking with the blood of the friends of freedom,—I say, when the patriot, who sees in our religion the instruments of these crimes and woes, believes and affirms that it is not from God, are we authorized to charge his unbelief on dishonesty and corruption of mind, and to brand him as a culprit? May it not be that the spirit of Christianity in his heart emboldens him to protest with his lips against what bears the name? And if he thus protest, through a deep sympathy with the oppression and sufferings of his race, is he not nearer the kingdom of God than the priest and the inquisitor who boastingly and exclusively assume the Christian name? Jesus Christ has told us that 'this is the condemnation' of the unbelieving, 'that they love darkness rather than light;' and who does not see that this ground of condemnation is removed, just in proportion as the light is quenched, or Christian truth is buried in darkness and debasing error?"—*Channing*.

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is True. It is true; and its truth is to break forth more and more gloriously. Of this I have not a doubt. I know that our religion has been questioned even by intelligent and good men; but this does not shake my faith in its divine original or in its ultimate triumphs. Such men have questioned it, because they have known it chiefly by its corruptions. In proportion as its original simplicity shall be restored, the doubts of the well-disposed will yield. I have no fears from infidelity; especially from that form of it which some are at this moment labouring to spread through our country (America). I mean, that insane, desperate unbelief, which strives to quench the light of nature as well as of revelation, and to leave us, not only without Christ, but without God. This I dread no more than I should fear the efforts of men to pluck the sun from his sphere; or to storm the skies with the artillery of the earth. We were made for religion; and unless the enemies of our faith can change our nature, they will leave the foundation of religion unshaken. The human soul was created to look above ma-

terial nature. It wants a Deity for its love and trust, an Immortality for its hope. It wants consolations not found in philosophy, wants strength in temptation, sorrow, and death, which human wisdom cannot minister; and knowing, as I do, that Christianity meets these deep wants of men, I have no fear or doubt as to its triumphs. Men cannot long live without religion. In France there is a spreading dissatisfaction with the sceptical spirit of the past generation. A philosopher in that country would now blush to quote Voltaire as an authority in religion. Already atheism is dumb where once it seemed to bear sway. The greatest minds in France are working back their way to the light of truth. Many of them cannot indeed yet be called Christians; but their path, like that of the wise men of old, who came star-guided from the East, is towards Christ. I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. It has an immortal life, and will gather strength from the violence of its foes. It is equal to all the wants of men. The greatest minds have found in it the light which they most anxiously desired. The most sorrowful and broken spirits have found in it a healing balm for their woes. It has inspired the sublimest virtues and the loftiest hopes. For the corruptions of such a religion I weep, and I should blush to be their advocate; but of the Gospel itself I can never be ashamed."—*Channing*.

NOTE 9, page 39.

"Having found that *pride of reason is an aggression upon other men's reason*, arising from an over-estimate of the worth of the aggressor's own, we may now proceed in our inquiry, who are justly chargeable with pride of *reason*? Is it those who, having examined the Scriptures, propose their own collective sense of those books to the acceptance of others, but blame them not for rejecting it? or those who positively assert, that their own sense of the Scriptures is the only one which an honest man, not under diabolical delusion, can find there? The answer is so plain, that a child, who could understand the terms of the question, might give it. And yet experience has taught me that there is no chance of unravelling the confused ideas which prevent many a well-meaning Christian from perceiving that the charge of the pride of reason falls upon the Orthodox. Their own *sense* of the Scripture (such is the dizzy whirl which their excited feelings produce) must be the *word of God*, because THEY cannot find another. *My sense* of the Scripture must, (for instance), on the contrary, be a damnable error, because it is the work of my *reason*,

which opposes the word of God, *i. e.* THEIR sense of the Scriptures: hence the conclusion that I am guilty of *pride of reason*. 'Renounce that *pride*, (they say,) and you will see in the Scriptures what we propose to you:' which is to say, *surrender your reason to ours, and you will agree with us*. * * *

"It is remarkable that Christians are accused of *Pride of reason* in proportion as their view of Christianity contains fewer *doctrines of inference* than that of the accusers. Compare the creed of the Trinitarian with that of the Unitarian. The former may be true, and the latter erroneous, though I adhere to the latter; but unquestionably the *Trinitarian Creed* is nearly made up of *inferences*, it is almost entirely a work of *reason*, though, in my eyes, sadly misapplied. Why, then, is the *Unitarian* accused of *pride of reason*, when he only employs it to show that the Trinitarian has not any *sound reason* to draw those inferences? which of the two is guilty of encroaching upon another man's *rights of reason*? Is it not he who claims for his inferences—the work of his own *reason*—an authority above human *reason*?

"It is not, however, to *inferences* alone (the work of logical reason) that the Trinitarian creed owes its existence, and, more than its existence, its popularity. My observation has shown me, and that of every competent judge will find, that the strongest hold which that creed has on the minds of its supporters, consists in *preconceived theories* concerning the nature of God and of sin, and of some *necessity* which places the Divine Nature in a state of difficulty in regard to the pardon of sin. The work of saving the race of man from a most horrible fate depends (according to this theory) not only on a very mysterious method of overcoming the difficulty which prevents pardon by an act of mercy, on repentance, but also on the acknowledgment of the *mystery* by the sinner. The remedy prepared by the wisdom of God is (according to this theory) totally powerless, unless we believe a certain explanation of the *manner* in which it acts.

"Now people who cordially embrace this view very naturally work themselves into a state of the most agonizing excitement: for if the whole world is to perish because it does not know how the saving remedy acts, or because its activity is explained in a wrong way, benevolent men, who think themselves in possession of that important secret, must burn with zeal to spread it, and with indignation against those who propagate an explanation which deprives the remedy of all its power. 'Believing,' says an orthodox writer, though a dissenter

from the orthodoxy of the Church of England, 'the doctrine (of the divinity of Christ) to comprehend within itself the hopes of a guilty and perishing world, while I would contend *meekly*, I must be pardoned if, at the same time, I contend earnestly.' It is this preconceived theory (one of the strangest that was ever founded on reasonings *à priori*) that guides most Christians in the exposition of the New Testament, and even in that of many passages of the Hebrew Scriptures. The notion that sin *could not* be pardoned unless a person *equal to God* suffered for it, is the deeply-coloured glass through which the orthodox read the Scriptures. I do not *blame* them for this extraordinary conception. What I earnestly wish is, that their religious fears may allow them to perceive that this theory of redemption is made up of *preconceived notions and inferences*. Even if that theory were true, it would unquestionably be a work of *reason* working by inference. Can, then, the attempt to make it the very soul of the Gospel be acquitted of the charge which is constantly in the mouth of the orthodox? Are they not guilty of the *pride of reason*?"—*Heresy and Orthodoxy*.

Comments on Rev. F. Ould's Lecture on the practical importance of the Controversy with Unitarians.

Page 5.—It is here argued that the error, if an error, of denying Unitarians to be Christians is as *innocent*, as the error, if one, of denying Jesus to be God. Certainly, if equally involuntary and the pure conclusion of a truthful mind. But, if an error, it involves two errors,—first, the mistake as to the nature and offices of Jesus, and second, the mistake of making essentials which Jesus did not make, and of passing judgments which Jesus did not pass. It is also essentially Anti-Protestant.

Page 6.—"But if it be a characteristic of true Christianity so to trust in Christ, as to commit the salvation of our souls into his hands, how can we conceive of those as true Christians who consider him only as a fellow creature, and consequently repose in him no such trust?" Trust is a *moral* act of the mind. We trust Jesus spiritually. Our souls feel him to be the Image of God: and we confide ourselves with a perfect trust to the God of Love whom Jesus imaged. "Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." Our hearts are not troubled because our faith rests upon the God whom Jesus has made known to us. This is the only intelligible meaning of TRUST as a spiritual act. We trust *him* whom we believe God to have trusted and sent.

Page 8.—"We maintain that the Bible is alone safely interpreted by its Author and Inspirer, the Holy Ghost." Do the Trinitarians mean that *their* interpretations of the Bible are the interpretations of the Holy Spirit? If so, we can have no controversy with them. If they are inspired to interpret, what the Apostles were inspired to write, nothing is required but *that this should be proved.*

Page 11, 12.—"The New Testament writers also assert their own inspiration in language equally strong. 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable,' &c. St. Paul does *not* here assert *his own* inspiration, but the inspiration of the Jewish Prophets, the study of whom had made Timothy wise unto salvation through faith in Christ. The Christian Scriptures were not in existence when the words were written. It is also very doubtful whether the word

translated, 'given by inspiration of God,' signifies 'breathing *of* God,' or 'breathed *from* God.'

"'No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation,' &c. The inspiration of Prophecy is not denied. But can anything be more idle than to prove the inspiration of all the books of the Old Testament by such a quotation as this: 'Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.'"

Page 16.—"So then, it appears, that if these 'rational and liberal' critics are not allowed to Unitarianize the Bible, they are prepared to deny its divine authority, and to give it up to its enemies!" Dr. Channing *does not say so.* What he says is, that he cannot defend the Scriptures unless he is allowed to interpret them by the same principles which are applied to all other works. And this principle of interpretation we understood Dr. Tattershall freely to admit. The use that is made of the extract from Dr. Channing, exhibits the temptations of controversy. There is nothing in the extract that Trinitarians themselves would not say upon occasion. Why is it thought worthy of being marked in italics that the dispensation of Moses is imperfect when compared with that of Jesus? Is this denied? Why is the word *seems* italicized, when the connected word is not rejects, but only *distrusts?* Yet the author praises the candour of Dr. Channing.

Page 20, 21.—"The improved Version." It is a curious fact that most of the Trinitarian objections to the Improved Version have been provided for them by an Unitarian Critic and Reviewer. Dr. Carpenter in his reply to Archbishop Magee states, "I furnished to the opponents of the Improved Version some of the most powerful weapons against it." Again, "At my request a young friend undertook to draw up the table I wished. This led him to collate the two Versions, which he did with great patience and fidelity. He discovered some variations from the basis which were not noticed; and I thought it right to point them out. It is not too much to say that, but for this, neither Bishop Magee, nor any others who have censured the Improved Version, would have been aware of their existence."—pp. 308, 309. Whatever becomes of the Improved Version, the Controversy between Unitarianism and Trinitarianism remains just where it was, to be settled upon independent principles, critical and

exegetical. So far, the whole indictment against the Improved Version relates to the introductory chapters of Matthew and Luke. Suppose those chapters authentic and genuine, and what follows from them? The doctrine of the Miraculous Conception, which most Unitarians believe. Professor Norton, the ablest, perhaps, of American Unitarian Critics, defends this doctrine. The introductory chapters of Matthew he rejects, chiefly on account of their inconsistencies with those of Luke, the authenticity of which he does not doubt. Dr. Carpenter also critically dissents from the Notes in the Improved Version on the introductions of Matthew and Luke. Reply to Dr. Magee, p. 299. It is not then such a *new* thing among Unitarians, to question the authority of the Improved Version. Will the Author inform us where he got his knowledge respecting Ebion, his existence and opinions?

Page 25.—In an introductory Lecture on the "*practical*" *tendencies* of views, we labour under the disadvantage of being obliged to allow scriptural language to be quoted in a sense which we do not admit. It would be evidently quite out of place to enter here into the *textual* controversy. This will be done abundantly in the course of these Lectures.

Page 37.—Does the Author deny that Free Inquiry generates a degree of scepticism—that is, not of unbelief, but of the examining and questioning spirit? Or does he mean to object to all free inquiry on account of this tendency? It is extraordinary reasoning to take Dr. Channing's *caution against a sceptical spirit*, proceeding from the very constitution of mind, as a proof of the tendency of Unitarianism to infidelity. If Unitarianism leads to unbelief, it is strange that so many Unitarians should defend the Evidences of Christianity, and that one of them, Dr. Lardner, is the great authority from which Trinitarians themselves draw their knowledge of the external testimonies.

Page 39.—"Another leading principle, common to both systems, (Unitarianism and Infidelity,) is *the non-importance of principle itself to the enjoyment of the Divine favour.*" Let it be known, that by *principle* here, the Author means *opinions*.

Page 41.—"Does the Deist reject the Bible because God is re-

presented as a being who takes vengeance? So does the Unitarian for the very same reason reject the Gospel? Does the Deist reject the Bible because it contains the doctrine of atonement and of divine sovereignty? For the very same reason the Unitarian rejects the Gospel." It is melancholy to have to remark upon this passage. The Unitarian *does not reject the Gospel*, unless the Gospel means Trinitarianism, a use of words which, in controversy, cannot be justified. The Unitarian does not deny that God takes vengeance, if by vengeance is meant the infliction of retribution. The Unitarian accepts the Gospel, but *does not find in it* the doctrine of Atonement.

Page 46.—"How, on Unitarian principles, this reasoning can be answered, is more than I can tell." Jesus *did* refer to God both his words and his works. But Unitarians do not regard the mission of Jesus as similar to that of any of the Prophets. It was essentially different. He was himself the Revelation: a man in the image of God. By the Prophets, God taught the Jews certain lessons, and inspired certain expectations. By Jesus, in whom was the spirit without measure, God exhibited a perfect revelation both of human perfection and of human destinies. God's word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us. The purposes of the Deity were impersonated. He was consequently the life, and the way, as well as the truth.

Page 59.—Does the Author mean to contend that Thomas was an INSPIRED MAN when he refused to believe in the risen Jesus. We had thought the Trinitarian view was, that the day of Pentecost dated the inspiration of the apostles. But it appears the Author believes Thomas to be inspired when refusing to believe in the resurrection of Christ.

Page 60.—Is not the Author aware of the doubtful authenticity of the second epistle of Peter, from which he quotes twice, contrary to the judgment of Lardner, who decides that the doubtful Epistles, so stated by Eusebius, should not be used as authority for doctrines?

There are other passages in this Lecture on which we might comment. But we refrain. We wished to remark upon those passages which affect the cause, and not more than was unavoidable upon those which affect only the advocate.

UNITARIAN AND TRINITARIAN CONTROVERSY AT LIVERPOOL.

Syllabus of a Course of Lectures intended to be delivered successively.

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2. The Integrity of the Canon of Holy Scripture maintained against Unitarian Objections - *Rev. Dr. Tattershall.*

February 20.
3. The Unitarian Interpretation of the New Testament based upon defective Scholarship, or on dishonest or uncandid Criticism - *Rev. T. Byrth.*

February 27.
4. The proper Humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ - - - - *Rev. J. Jones.*

March 6.
5. The proper Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ proved from Prophecies, Types, and Jewish Ordinances - - - - - - *Rev. J. H. Stewart.*

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6. The proper Deity of our Lord the only ground of Consistency in the Work of Redemption - *Rev. H. M'Neile.*

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10. The Sacraments practically rejected by Unitarians - - *Rev. H. W. M'Grath.*

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12. The Personality and Agency of Satan - - - - - - *Rev. H. Stowell.*

May 1.
13. The Eternity of future Rewards and Punishments - - - *Rev. W. Dalton.*

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ON TUESDAY EVENINGS IN PARADISE-ST. CH

1839.—February 12.
1. The practical importance of the Unitarian Controversy - - *Rev. J. H.*

February 19.
2. The Bible; what it is, and what it is not - - - - - - *Rev. J. Mar*

February 26.
3. Christianity not the property of Critics and Scholars, but the gift of God to all men - - - *Rev. J. H.*

March 5.
4. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus" - - - *Rev. H. Gil*

March 12.
5. The proposition 'That Christ is God,' proved to be false from the Jewish and the Christian Scriptures - - - - - - *Rev. J. Mar*

March 19.
6. The scheme of Vicarious Redemption inconsistent with itself, and with the Christian idea of Salvation - - - - - - - *Rev. J. Mar*

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7. The unscriptural Origin and Ecclesiastical History of the Doctrine of the Trinity - - - *Rev. J. H.*

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8. Man, the Image of God - - *Rev. H. Gil*

April 9.
9. The Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, who dwelleth in us, and and teacheth all things - - *Rev. J. H.*

April 16.
10. Christianity without Priest, and without Ritual - - - - *Rev. J. Mar*

April 23.
11. Creeds the foes of Heavenly Faith; the allies of worldly Policy - *Rev. H. Gil*

April 30.
12. The Christian view of Moral Evil here - - - - - - - *Rev. J. Mar*

May 7.
13. The Christian view of Retribution hereafter - - - - *Rev. H. Gil*

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THE BIBLE:

WHAT IT IS, AND WHAT IT IS NOT;

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN

PARADISE STREET CHAPEL,

LIVERPOOL,

ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1839.

BY

REV. JAMES MARTINEAU.

BEING THE SECOND OF A SERIES, TO BE DELIVERED WEEKLY, IN ANSWER TO A COURSE OF LECTURES AGAINST UNITARIANISM, IN CHRIST CHURCH, LIVERPOOL, BY THIRTEEN CLERGYMEN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

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LECTURE II.

THE BIBLE: WHAT IT IS, AND WHAT IT IS NOT.

BY REV. JAMES MARTINEAU.

"AND THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH, AND DWELT AMONG US, (AND WE BEHELD HIS GLORY, THE GLORY AS OF THE ONLY-BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER,) FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH."—*John* i. 14.

THE Bible is the great autobiography of human nature, from its infancy to its perfection. Whatever man has seen and felt and done on the theatre of this earth, is expressed therein with the simplicity and vividness of personal consciousness. The first wondering impressions of the new-created being, just dropt upon a scene quite strange;—the hardened heart and daring crimes of the long-resident here, forgetting that he dwells in a hospice of the Lord, and not a property of his own;—the recalled and penitent spirit, awakened by the voice of Christ, when, to a world grown old and dead in custom, he brought back the living presence of God, and to the first reverence added the maturest love;—all this is recorded there, written down in the happiest moments of inspiration, which have fallen upon our race during the lapse of sixteen centuries. The volume stations us on a spot, well selected as a watch-tower, from which we may overlook the history of the world;—an angle of coast between the ancient continents of Africa and Asia, subtended by the newer line of European civilization. Thence have we a neighbouring view of every form of human life, and every variety of human character. The

solitary shepherd on the slopes of Chaldæa, watching the changing heavens till he worships them; the patriarch pitching his tent in the nearer plain of Mamre; the Arab, half merchant, half marauder, hurrying his fleet dromedaries across the sunny desert; the Phœnician commerce gladdening the Levant with its sails, or, on its way from India, spreading its wares in the streets of Jerusalem; the urban magnificence of Babylonia, and the sacerdotal grandeur of Egypt; all are spread beneath our eye, in colours vivid, but with passage swift. Even the echo of Grecian revolutions, and the tramp of Roman armies, and the incipient rush of Eastern nations, that will overwhelm them both, may be distinctly heard; brief agents, every one, on this stage of Providence, beckoned forward by the finger of Omnipotence, and waved off again by the signals of mercy ever new.

The interest of this wide and various scriptural scene, gradually gathers itself in towards a single point. There is One who stands at the place where its converging lines all meet; and we are led over the expanse of world-history, that we may rest at length beneath the eye of the Prophet of Nazareth. He is the central object, around whom all the ages and events of the Bible are but an outlying circumference; and when they have brought us to this place of repose, to return upon them again would be an idle wandering. They all are preliminaries, that accomplish their end in leading us hither.—"The law," aye, and the prophets too, we esteem "our schoolmasters to bring us to Christ:"* and though, like grateful pupils, we may look back on them with true-hearted respect, and even think their labours not thrown away on such as may still be children in the Lord, we have no idea of acknowledging any more the authority of the task, the threat, the rod. To sit at the feet of Jesus we take to be the only proper position for the true disciple; to listen to his voice

* Galatians iii. 24.

" the one thing needful;" and however much others, notwithstanding that he is come, may make themselves " anxious and troubled about many things" besides, and fret themselves still about the preparations for his entertainment, we choose to quit all else, and keep close to him, as that better " part, which shall not be taken from" us. Whatever holy influences of the Divine Word may be found in the old Scriptures, are all collected into one at length; " the Word hath been made Flesh," and in a living form hath " dwelt among us;" and from its fulness of " grace and truth" we will not be torn away.

If the ultimate ends of Scripture are attained in Christ, that portion of the Bible which makes us most intimate with him, must be of paramount interest. Compelled then as I am, by my limits, to narrow our inquiry into the proper treatment of Scripture, I take up the New Testament exclusively, and especially the Gospels, for examination and comment to-night.

Suppose then that these books are put into our hands for the first time;—disinterred, if you please, from a chamber in Pompeii;—without title, name, date, or other external description; and that with unembarrassed mind and fresh heart, we go apart with these treasures to examine them.

It is not long before their extraordinary character becomes evident. All minds are known by their works,—the human quite as distinctly as the Divine: and if " the invisible things of God" " are clearly seen" " by the things that are made," and on the material structures of the universe the moral attributes of his nature may be discerned,—with much greater certainty do the secret qualities of a man's soul,—his honesty or cunning, his truthfulness or fraud,—impress themselves on his speech and writings. To a clear eye his moral nature will unerringly betray itself, even in a disquisition; more, in a fiction; more still, in a history; and most of all, in a biography of a personal companion and teacher, drawing forth

in turns his friendship and grief, his pity and terror, his love and doubt and trust, his feelings to country, to duty, to God, to heaven. Accordingly in these Gospels, and in the Journal of travels and Collection of letters, which carry out and illustrate the development of a new religion, I find myself in the presence of honest and earnest men, who are plainly strangers to fiction and philosophy, and lead me through realities fairer and diviner than either. They take me to actual places, and tell the events of a known and definite time. They conduct me through villages, and streets, and markets; to frequented resorts of worship, and hostile halls of justice, and the tribunals of Roman rulers, and the theatres of Asiatic cities, and the concourse of Mars' hill at Athens: so that there is no denying their appeal, these things were "not done in a corner."* Yet their frank delineation of public life is less impressive, than their true and tender touches of private history. Following in the steps of the world's domestic prophet, they entered, evening and morning, the homes of men,—especially of men in watching and in grief, the wasted in body or the sick in soul: and the unconsciousness with which the most genuine traits of nature gleam through the narrative, the infantile simplicity with which every one's emotions, of sorrow, of repentance, of affection, give themselves to utterance, indicate that, with One who bare the key of hearts, the writers had been into the deep places of our humanity. The infants in his arms look up in the face of Jesus as we read; the Pharisee mutters in our ear his sceptic discontent at that loving "woman who was a sinner" kneeling at the Teacher's feet; and the voice of the bereaved sisters of Lazarus trembles upon the page.

But, above all, these writings introduce me to a Being so unimaginable, except by the great Inventor of beauty and Architect of nature himself, that I embrace him at once, as

* Acts xxvi. 26.

having all the reality of man and the divinest inspiration of God. Gentle and unconstrained as he is, ever standing, even on the brink of the most stupendous miracles, in the easiest attitudes of our humanity, so that we are drawn to him as to one of like nature, we yet cannot enter his presence without feeling our souls transformed. Their greatness, first recognized by him, becomes manifest to ourselves: the death of conscience is broken by his tones; the sense of accountability takes life within the deep; new thoughts of duty, shed from his lips, shame us for the past, and kindle us for the future with hope and faith unknown before. His promise* fulfils itself, whilst he utters it; and whenever we truly love him, God comes, and "makes his abode with" us. He has this peculiarity: that he plunges us into the feeling, that God acts not *there*, but *here*; not *was once*, but *is now*; dwells, not *without us*, like a dreadful sentinel, but *within us*, as a heavenly spirit, befriending us in weakness, and bracing us for conflict. The inspiration of Christ is not any solitary, barren, incommunicable prodigy; but diffusive, creative, vivifying as the energy of God:—not gathered up and concentrated in himself, as an object of distant wonder; but reproducing itself, though in fainter forms, in the faithful hearts to which it spreads. While in him it had no human origin, but was spontaneous and primitive, flowing directly from the perception and affinity of God, it enters our souls as a gift from his nearer spirit, making us one with him, as he is one with the Eternal Father. Children of God indeed we all are: nor is there any mind without his image: but in this Man of Sorrows the divine lineaments are so distinct, the filial resemblance to the Parent-spirit is so full of grace and truth, that in its presence all other similitude fades away, and we behold his "glory as of the *only* begotten of the Father." It is the very spirit of Deity visible on the scale of humanity. The colours of his mind, projected on the

* John xiv. 23.

surface of Infinitude, form there the all-perfect God. The mere fact of his consciousness of the alliance with the Creator, and his tranquil announcement of it, without the slightest inflation, and amid the exercise of the meekest sympathies, appears to me all-persuasive. From whom else could we hear such claims without disgust? In a moment they would turn respect into aversion, and we should pity them as insanity, or resent them as impiety. But to him they seem only level and natural; we hear them with assent and awe, prepared by such a transcendent veneration as only a being truly God-like could excite. This is one of those statements which refutes or proves itself. Whoever, calmly affirming himself the Son and express similitude of God, can thereby draw to him, instead of driving from him, the affections of the wise and good, proclaims a thing self-evident; requiring, however, to be stated, in order to be tested.

Of such *self-evidence* as this, the gospels appear to me to be full. Whenever men shall learn to prefer a religious to a theological appreciation of Christ, and esteem his mind greater than his rank, much more of this kind of internal proof will present itself. It has the advantage of requiring no impracticable learning, and being open, on internal study of the books, to all men of pure mind and genuine heart; it is moral, not literary; addressing itself to the intuitions of conscience, not to the critical faculties. It makes us disciples, on the same principles with the first followers of Christ, who troubled themselves about no books, and forged no chains of scholastic logic to tie them to the faith; but watched the Prophet, beheld his deeds of power, felt his heavenly spirit, heard his word, found it glad tidings, and believed. In short, it is identical with the evidence to which our Lord was so fond of appealing when he said, "No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him;"* "every one that is of the truth heareth my

* John vi. 44.

voice;"* "if I do not the works of my Father, believe me not;"† "my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me;"‡ "if any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."§ This spiritual attraction to Christ, arising out of mere contemplation and study of the interior of his life, is enough to bring us reverently to his feet,—to accept him as the divinely-sent image of Deity, and the appointed representative of God. If this be not discipleship, allow me to ask, "*What is it?*"

I consider, then, this *internal or self-evidence* of the New Testament, as incomparably the most powerful that can be adduced; as securing for Christianity an eternal seat in human nature, so as to throw ridicule on the idea of its subversion; and as the only evidence suitable, from its universality, to a religion intended for the majority of men, rather than for an oligarchy of literati.

But though the divine perfection and authority of Christ may thus be made manifest to our moral and spiritual nature, what is called the plenary inspiration of the whole Bible is by no means a thing equally self-evident. By the term *plenary inspiration* is denoted the doctrine, That every idea which a just interpretation may discover in the Scriptures, is infallibly true, and that even every word employed in its expression is dictated by the unerring spirit of God; so that every statement, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelations, must be implicitly received, "as though from the lips of the Almighty himself." We are first assured that whoever denies this, shall have his name cancelled from the Book of life; and then we are called upon to come forward, and say plainly whether we believe it. The invitation sounds terrible enough. Nevertheless, having a faith in God, which takes the awe out of Church thunders, I say distinctly, this

* John xviii. 37. † John x. 37. ‡ John x. 27. § John vii. 17.

doctrine we do not believe; and ere I have done, I hope to show that no man who can weigh evidence, ought to believe it.

It is clear that, by no interior marks, can a book prove this sort of inspiration to belong to itself. Accordingly, the advocates for it are obliged to quit the intrinsic evidence, of which I have hitherto spoken, and to seek external and foreign testimony on behalf of the Biblical writings, and of the New Testament in the first instance. The course of the reasoning is thus adverted to by Bishop Marsh: "The arguments which are used," he says, "for divine inspiration, are all founded on the previous supposition that the Bible is *true*; for we appeal to the contents of the Bible in proof of inspiration. Consequently, these arguments can have no force till the authenticity and credibility of the Bible have been already established." * "Suppose," observes the same author, "that a professor of Divinity begins his course of lectures with the doctrine of divine inspiration; this doctrine, however true in itself, or however certain the arguments by which it may be established, cannot possibly, in that stage of his enquiry, be proved to the satisfaction of his audience; because he has not yet established other truths, from which this must be deduced. For whether he appeals to the promises of Christ to his Apostles, or to the declarations of the Apostles themselves, he must take for granted that these promises and declarations were really made; *i. e.* he must take for granted the authenticity of the writings in which these promises and declarations are recorded. But how is it possible that conviction should be the consequence of postulating, instead of proving, a fact of such importance?" "If (as is too often the case in theological works) we undertake to prove a proposition by the aid of another which is hereafter to be proved, the inevitable consequence is, that

* Lectures on the Criticism and Interpretation of the Bible. Preliminary Lecture II, p. 35.

the proposition in question becomes a link in the chain by which we establish that very proposition, which at first was taken for granted. Thus we prove premises from inferences, as well as inferences from premises; or, in other words, we prove—nothing." *

In perfect consistency with these remarks, was the lucid exposition of the true method of theological enquiry, which I had the privilege of hearing in Christ Church, on Wednesday last: to every word of which (limiting it, however, to the external evidences of Christianity) I entirely assent. It was then stated that we must

(1st.) Ascertain that the books under examination are self-consistent, and that they contain nothing at variance with the character of God impressed upon his works.

(2ndly.) Enquire whether the writings are really the productions of the authors whose names they bear; or, in other words, determine their *authenticity*.

(3dly.) Whether the writers were in circumstances to know what they relate, and were persons of character and veracity.

(4thly.) Whether we have the works in an unmutilated state, and as they came from the pens of the authors.

If all these researches should have an issue favourable to the writings, the Lecturer conceives, for reasons which I think very inconclusive, that the following inferences may be drawn:—

(1.) That the whole contents of the Bible have divine authority, because they truly report the fulfilment of prophecy, and the performance of miracles; and all the doctrines and lessons of a person who works miracles must have divine authority.

(2.) That the writers were so inspired, that their writings are, in all respects, infallibly correct; for, among the facts

* Preliminary Lecture I, pp. 4, 5.

narrated, (and which we admit to be true) is this one; that the Holy Ghost was promised to the Apostles, and actually descended on the disciples assembled on the day of Pentecost, and was so extensively communicated through them to the early church, that no New Testament writer could be without it. So that these books are as strictly *the Word of God, as if all their statements proceeded at once and immediately from the lips of the Almighty himself.*

As "the Word of God" is a beautiful Scriptural phrase, which I must refuse to give up to this most unscriptural idea, I shall replace it, when I wish to speak of verbal inspiration, by the more appropriate expression, the *Words* of God. I discern in the Bible *the Word of God*, but by no means the *Words of God.*

For the sake of brevity, I may be allowed to compress this elaborate system of external evidence into two successive divisions; and, taking up the first Gospel as an example, I should say, we have to enquire respecting it,

(1.) Whether we have the words of St. Matthew. And if this be determined in the affirmative,

(2.) Whether we have the words of God.

(1.) Our first attempt then must be, to establish the origin of these books from Apostles or Apostolic men,—which is the sole ground for affirming their infallibility. The method by which their origin must be ascertained is admitted to be similar to that which would be employed in the case of any work not sacred. It is an enquiry altogether historical or antiquarian;—a process of literary identification. We must collect, and dispose along an ascending chronological line, the various writers who have quoted and mentioned the New Testament writings; call each, in turn, into the court of criticism, to speak to the identity of the work he cites, with that which we possess; and if the series of witnesses be complete,—if, in following into antiquity the steps of their attestation, we find ourselves in contact with the Apostolic

age, and near the seats of Apostolic labours, we justly conclude that we have the genuine and original productions. By the help of this foreign testimony, almost all the books of the New Testament may be traced perhaps to the middle of the second century; the remaining fifty or sixty years to the death of St. John, and eighty or ninety to that of the Apostle of the Gentiles, must be filled up by arguments showing, that this chasm is too small for the possibilities of forgery and mistake to take effect. The results of this process are not fit matter for detailed criticism here; I will simply state, in general, that they yield a preponderating probability in favour of the general reception, in the second age of the church, of all the New Testament writings, under the names of their reputed authors; and that it would be unreasonable to expect more precise external evidence of authenticity than this. It is indeed much easier to prove, in this way, the origin, from the founders of our religion, of the books which we receive, than to disprove a like authority with respect to others which we disown, or whose memory (for many of them are lost) we dishonour. The equal antiquity of some of these repudiated works, it is scarcely possible to deny; their inferior authority we are obliged either to conclude from their intrinsic character, (a reason, often abundantly satisfactory,) or to assume on the word of a set of ecclesiastical writers, not generally distinguished for sound judgment or tranquil passions, nor always trust-worthy, even in matters of fact; and who notoriously formed their estimate of Christian books, less from enquiry into their genuineness, than from the supposed orthodoxy of their contents. The Christian Fathers, on whose statement the whole case rests, were undoubtedly guilty of that which, at all events, with far less justice, is charged on Unitarian authors; they threw away many a writing as spurious, because they did not like its doctrines: testing the work by their own belief, instead of their own belief by the work. The zone of proof which en-

circles the books within the canon, and separates them from the apocryphal tribe without, appears to me less sacred, and more faint, than it is common for theologians to allow. And even when the selection has been made, and we have agreed to accept the canon as it is, it is impossible, until it is shown that one uniform inspiration produced the whole, to acknowledge the equal value of every part. It is usual to urge the "authenticity" upon us as a kind of technical quantity which we must take or reject, an indivisible theological unit admitting of no variation, but that of positive or negative. But it would surely be extraordinary, if all the twenty-seven books of the New Testament should have precisely the same amount of historical attestation in their favour; and it is undeniable that they have not. The probabilities are much stronger in behalf of some books than in that of others, though preponderant in all. There is a gradation of evidence, arranging the writings along at least five separate steps in the descent of proof; in effecting this division, however, let it be clearly understood, that I refer solely to the literary question of personal authorship, not to that of religious worth and authority; and that, for the moment, I take into account the internal as well as external considerations bearing upon this single point.

1. The letters of St. Paul (excepting Hebrews) occupy the highest station of evidence.

2. The remaining letters, excepting 2nd Peter and Hebrews again, I should place next.

3. The Gospel of St. John is more certainly authentic than the other three; which, however, would follow in the

4th place. And the list will be closed by

5. The Apocalypse, 2 Peter, and the Epistle to the Hebrews.

This arrangement might be justified, if it were necessary, in detail. But my sole purpose in stating it now, is to convey a distinct idea of the kind of graduated scale of proof which, from the very nature of the enquiry, must be ap-

plied to the authenticity of the Christian records; and to give force to the protest, which truth compels me to enter, against the indiscriminate coercion of assent attempted by theologians in this argument. With this qualification then, we approve the general decision of the Protestant Churches, and adopt as authentic the canon as it stands. "Unitarians," we repeat, "have neither canon nor version of their own."

"What! not the Improved Version?" I shall be asked:—that favourite achievement of your most renowned Unitarian champions;—published by a Unitarian society;—circulated among your laity in three simultaneous editions; when assailed successively by Dr. Nares and Archbishop Magee, repeatedly defended by your ablest critics in your own Journals; containing moreover all the standard heresies of your sect; using all your received methods of getting rid of troublesome texts; and especially relieving you of the doctrine of the miraculous conception by the liberal application of Jehoiakim's pen-knife to the initial chapters of Matthew and Luke?* "The shades of Belsham, Lindsey, Jebb, Priestley, Wakefield, &c., might well be astonished to hear their learned labours so contemptuously spoken of by" the "modern disciples of their school." †

Now it so happens, that, excepting two, all these good men were dead before the commencement of that work. Of the two survivors, Mr. Lindsey was disabled, by the infirmities of age, from any participation in it, and scarcely lived to see it published.‡ The remaining divine, Mr. Belsham, was the real Editor of this translation; and alone, among Unitarians, must have the whole honour or dishonour of the work. The funds for the publication were doubtless fur-

* Jer. xxxvi. 23. See Rev. Dr. Tattershall's Lecture on the Integrity of the Canon. Introduction.

† Rev. F. Ould's Letter of February 11, 1839.

‡ The Improved Version was published in August 1808. Rev. T. Lindsey, who had been labouring under the effects of paralysis ever since 1801, died November 3rd, the same year.

nished by a society, whose members hoped thus to present the theologian with a valuable contribution to Biblical literature; but had neither power nor wish to bind themselves or others to an approval of its criticisms, or a maintenance of its interpretations. That "all the ministers belonging to this Society" were enrolled in the Committee for preparing the Work, is itself a proof of the small proportion which the Association bore to the whole body of Unitarians; and is well known to have been an inoperative form, which had no practical effect in dividing the chief Editor's responsibility. The Version adopts, as a basis, the "Attempt towards revising our English Translation of the Greek Scriptures," by Archbishop Newcome, Primate of Ireland; from which, including the smallest verbal variations, there are not, on an average, more than two deviations in a page; and it is a principle with the Editors, that these departures shall be noticed in the margin; so that any one, having the Improved Version in his hand, has the Archbishop's Revision also before him. How far this translation has authority with Unitarians, may perhaps be judged of from one fact. The clergymen who are holding up this work to the pious horror of their hearers, are repeating charges against it, long ago preferred by Archbishop Magee; who, in his time, reproduced them from Dr. Nares, the Regius Professor of modern history in the University of Oxford; who, again, borrowed no small part of his materials from a Review of the Version, in the Monthly Repository for 1809, by Dr. Carpenter, a distinguished Unitarian Divine. I do not mean that there was nothing but reproduction of the original Reviewer's materials throughout all these steps; if it were so, I should be ashamed to call that venerable man my friend: fresh objections were added at every stage; and, by Archbishop Magee, a mass of abuse the most coarse, and misrepresentation the most black; repeated still by unsuspecting and unlearned admirers, who find it easier to acquire from him his aptitudes of calumny than

his acuteness in criticism. But the principal objections to the Improved Version were certainly anticipated by Dr. Carpenter, who furnished a list of unacknowledged deviations from Newcome's revision, and from Griesbach's and the Received Texts;—who censured the whole system of departure from that text, which seemed to be adopted as a standard; the license allowed to conjectural emendation; the preference of Newcome's to the authorized version as a basis; the introduction of any doctrinal notes; and, what is especially to our present purpose, who vindicated, from the suspicion of spuriousness, the initial chapters of St. Luke's Gospel, and consented to part with those of St. Matthew's, only because at variance with the authority of the third Evangelist. From the armoury, therefore, of our own church, are stolen the very weapons, wherewith now, amid taunts of sacerdotal derision, we are to be driven as intruders from the fair fields of learning. For myself, when the learned labours of Dissenters are ridiculed, and the "defective scholarship" of heretics affirmed, by the privileged clergy of the established church, I always think of the Universities,—those venerable seats of instruction, from which Nonconformists must be excluded. The precious food of knowledge is first locked up; the key is hung beyond our reach; and then the starvelings must be laughed at, when they sink and fall. But so is it always with unjust power; the habit of injury begets the propensity to scorn.*

But we are called upon to say, whether we really mean to repudiate the Improved Version. If by repudiate be meant, confess the truth of all the accusations brought against it, or reject it from our libraries as unworthy of consultation, we do not repudiate it. But we do refuse to be held responsible, directly or indirectly, for any portion of its criticisms; with which we have no more concern, than have our Reverend assailants with the Translation of Luther, or the Institutes

* See Note A.

of Calvin. If we are pressed with the personal inquiry, "but, what portion of its peculiarities, especially in relation to the narrative of the miraculous conception, do you as a matter of fact, approve?" I can answer for no one but myself, for we have no theological standards, nor any restriction on the exercise of private judgment, on such subjects. But individually, I have no objection to state, that I consider Mr. Belsham as having brought over the threshhold of his conversion so much of his original orthodoxy, that, like all who insist upon finding a uniform doctrinal system pervading the various records of Christianity, he is justly open to the charge of having accommodated both his criticism and his interpretations to his belief; that his objections to the authenticity of both accounts of the miraculous conception, appear to me altogether inconclusive; that I therefore leave these histories as integral parts of the gospels they introduce.* Whether I receive all their statements as unerringly true, is a question altogether different; nor can the Lecturer who calls on us to satisfy him on this point, link together in one query our reception of these chapters as *authentic* and as *true*, without falling into Mr. Belsham's own error of mixing these two things so obviously distinct. It no more follows, because these chapters are Matthew's, that they must be reconcileable with Luke, and so, free from objection to their truth; than, because they are inconsistent with Luke, therefore they cannot be Matthew's. This part of the inquiry belongs to the second portion of our discussion respecting the New Testament; whether, granting that we have the veritable words of the reputed authors, we have, in consequence, the *ipsissima verba* of God. To this topic let us now proceed.

(2.) The advocate of plenary inspiration, having obtained our assent to the authenticity of the Christian Scriptures, proceeds to show their truth. He reminds us that the

* See Note B.

depositions are no longer anonymous; and that the testimony having been duly signed, we may examine the character of the witnesses. We call them therefore before us. They are plain, plebeian, hard-handed men of toil, who have laboured in the fields and olive-grounds of Judæa, or held an oar on the Gallilean Lake; who nevertheless have been not without the cottage and the home, the parent, wife and child; belonging, moreover, to a country having something to remember, and more to expect. Addressed by a solitary and houseless wanderer from Nazareth, won by some undefinable attraction that makes them think him a man of God, they follow him awhile, hoping for promotion, if he should prove, as they suspect, to be some great one. Daily this hope declines, but hourly the love increases. They hang upon his words; their passions sink abashed before his look; they blindly follow his steps, knowing nothing but that they will be the steps of mercy; they rebuke the blind beggar who cries; but he calls him groping to him, and sends him dazzled away; they go to help the cripple, and ere they reach him, at a word he leaps up in strength; they fly at the shriek of the maniac from the tombs, when lo! he lapses into silence, and sits at the feet of the Nazarene in the tears of a right and grateful mind. How can they leave him? yet why precisely do they stay? If they depart, it is but to return with joy; and so they linger still, for they learn to trust him better than themselves. They go with him sorrowing; with occasional flashes of brilliant ambition, but with longer darkness between; with lowering hopes, but deepening love; to the farewell meal; to the moonlight garden, its anguished solitude, its tranquil surrender to the multitude, making the seeming captive the real conqueror; a few of them to the trial; one, to the cross; the women, even to the sepulchre; and all, agitated and unbelieving, were recalled in breathless haste from their despair by the third day's tidings, the Lord has risen indeed! Thenceforth, they too are risen from the

dead; the bandages as of the grave, drop from their souls; the spirit of God, which is the spirit of truth, comes to loose them and let go. Not higher did the Lord ascend to the heaven which holds him now, than did they rise above the level of their former life. They understand it all, and can proclaim it; the things that were to come,—that dreadful cross, that third day, so darkly hidden from their eyes,—are shown them now; a thousand things which he had said unto them, rush, by the help of this new spirit, to their remembrance. And forth they go, to tell the things which they have seen and heard. They most of them perished, not without joy, in the attempt; but they *did* tell them, with a voice that could summon nations and ages to the audience; which things are this day sounded in our ears.

But I suppose we must endeavour to speak coolly of these venerable men, if we are to save them from being deprived of their manhood, and turned into the petrified images and empty vessels, of a physical or intellectual inspiration. Why will the extravagance of Churches compel us to freeze down our religion into logic, to prevent it blazing into an unsocial fanaticism? If, however, we must weigh the Apostles' claims with nice precision, we must say (at this stage of our inquiry we can say only) that they were honest personal witnesses of visible and audible facts; deserving therefore of all the reliance to which veracity, severely tested, is entitled. To every thing then which comes under the description of *personal testimony*, their demand on our confidence extends; their own impressions we believe to have been as they record. But their inferences, their arguments, their interpretations of ancient writings, their speculations on future events, however just and perfect in themselves, are no part of the *report which they give in evidence*, and cannot be established by appeal to their integrity.

Nor, in this limitation of testimony to its proper province, is there anything in the slightest degree dishonourable to

these "chosen witnesses." "Is the judgment of the writers of the New Testament," says Archdeacon Paley, "in interpreting passages of the Old, or, sometimes perhaps in receiving established interpretations, so connected either with their veracity, or with their means of information concerning what was passing in their own times, as that a critical mistake, even were it clearly made out, should overthrow their historical credit? Does it diminish it? Has it any thing to do with it?" "We do not usually question the credit of a writer, by reason of an opinion he may have delivered upon subjects unconnected with his evidence; and even upon subjects connected with his account, or mixed with it in the same discourse or writing, we naturally separate facts from opinions, testimony from observation, narrative from argument."* Moreover, our dependance upon a faithful witness, besides being restricted to matters of fact, is measured by his *opportunities* of observation; and it would be absurd to insist on his being heard with precisely equal belief, whether he relates, to the best of his knowledge, that which happened before he was born, or tells an occurrence that passed under his eyes. If this distinction be not well founded, then has personal contact with events no advantage; the stranger is on a footing with the observer; and all the defensive reasonings which theologians have thrown round Christianity, from the station which the Apostles occupied as eye-witnesses, are destitute of meaning; supported though they are by the sanction of the Apostles themselves, whose constant claim to belief, when they preached, was this only, and "we are witnesses of these things." And if this distinction be well founded, there is just ground for discriminating between the different parts of an historian's narrative, and giving the highest place of credit to that which he had the best means of knowing; nor is it possible to admit the rule which I heard laid down on Wednesday evening, that if we discover in an

* Evidence of Christianity, part III, chapter 2.

Evangelist a single incorrect statement, the whole book must be repudiated,—selection being wholly out of the question. Of the birth of Christ, for example, St. Matthew was not a witness; of his ministry he was; and has the report of the latter no higher claim upon belief than the history of the former,—seen as it was only in retrospect, at the distance of from thirty to sixty years, and through the colours of a subsequent life so great, so marvellous, so solemn? Hence, with relation to the initial chapters of the first and third Evangelists, while I leave them on an equality with the rest of the Gospels, in respect of authenticity, I place them in an inferior rank of credibility; especially since I find it impossible to reconcile them with each other. To justify this opinion, I will point out two inconsistencies between them, one chronological, the other geographical. I heard it affirmed on Wednesday evening, that the former of these difficulties was only apparent, and arose from the mistaken calculation of our Christian era, the commencement of whose year, 1, does not really strike, as it ought, the hour of the nativity. Well then, we will throw this era aside for the moment, and employ another mode of reckoning, prevalent among the historians of those times, dating from the building of Rome. St. Luke tells us that in the fifteenth year of Tiberius, our Lord was about thirty years of age; this would assign the birth of Christ, at the earliest, to Jan. 1 of the year of Rome 751. According to St. Matthew, he was born full one year before the death of King Herod, whose massacre of the innocents included all under two years; the latest date that can be fixed for the death of Herod is Feb. or March 751, so that the nativity falls, according to one Evangelist not later than 750, according to the other not earlier than 751.* The geographical discrepancy between the two Evangelists has reference to the habitual residence of the Virgin Mary; St. Matthew supposes Bethlehem to have been Joseph's usual dwelling place; and

* See Note C.

" nothing can be more evident than that, according to the account of St. Luke, Joseph was a total stranger at Bethlehem." I quote the opinion of the Rev. Connop Thirlwall, a divine whose distinguished philological attainments have given him a European reputation, without at present raising him to that station in his own church, which would best suit his merits and her dignity.*

The variance between two narratives is no sufficient reason for rejecting both, though it compels the disbelief of one. In the present instance, the probabilities appear to preponderate in favour of St. Luke's. And, returning from the particular case to the general rule, I conclude this topic by repeating, respecting the "*credibility*" of any set of historical works, the remark formerly made respecting their "*authenticity*." I protest against its being urged upon us as an indissoluble magnitude, without fractional parts, incapable of increment or decrement, analysis or composition, which must be taken whole, or rejected whole; and I claim the right, till it can be shown not to belong to me, of reducing the recorded events of Scripture into classes, according to their degree of probability and their force of testimony. With this qualification, we maintain, with all other Christians, the ample credibility and the actual truth of the Gospel records, making no divorce between the natural and the miraculous, but taking both as inseparably woven together into the texture of the same faithful narrative.

But this step in the argument, I am reminded, cannot be taken without another, which brings us directly to the intellectual infallibility of the Apostles. Among the primary and undisputed facts which they record from personal experience, are the miracles which they wrought; and miracles, being an interposition of God, establish the divine authority of the performer; so that all the lessons and sentiments propounded

* See Note D.

by a person so endowed, must be received as immediate communications from the Unerring Spirit.

To this argument, if somewhat limited in the extent of its conclusion, I believe that most Unitarians would yield their assent. Certain it is that their best writers constantly reason from the miraculous acts, to the doctrinal inspiration of the first preachers of Christianity; and Dr. Priestley calls it "egregious trifling"* to question the soundness of the proof. Yet it is surely difficult to reconcile it with fact and scripture; and not less so to state it logically in words. In whatever form it is expressed, it rests upon a postulate which I hold to be false and irreligious; viz. that the supernatural is Divine, the natural not Divine; that God did the miracles, and since the creation has done nothing else; that Heaven gave a mission to those whom it thus endowed, and has given no mission to those who are otherwise endowed. All peculiar *consecration* of miracle is obtained by a precisely proportioned *desecration* of nature; it is out of a supposed contrast between the two, that the whole force of the impression arises. The imagination which overlooks and forgets all that is sacred in the common earth and sky, that gives itself over to the dream, that it is all dead mechanism,—downright clock-work, wound up perhaps at creation, but running down of itself till doom; the heart that feels nothing divine in life, and nothing holy in man; that has lost, from Epicurean sloth and sickness of soul, the healthy faculty of spontaneous wonder, and worship ever fresh,—are the pupils most ripe for this tutelage. The Deity must be thrust from the universe, or else benumbed there, in order to concentrate his energies in the preternatural. The speculative convert to miracles, is the practical Atheist of nature.

I need not remind any reader of the Gospels, of the accordance of this view with the general temper of our Lord's

* Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion, Part II. Ch. ii. § 1.

mind. His miracles, surely, sprung from compassionate, not proselytizing impulses; had a practical, not a didactic air; were not formally wrought as preliminaries to a discourse, but spontaneously issued from the quietude of pity; they were not syllogisms, but mercies. Nay, where conviction was most needed, what is said of him? "He did not many mighty works there, *because of their unbelief*;"* unless he wished them to continue in unbelief, he must have regarded miracles as an improper instrument of overcoming it. And can we forget his language of rebuke, "except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe."† When he appeals to his "*works*," it is to his "*many good works*;"‡ to the benevolence of his acts, not their marvellousness chiefly, to their being "the works of his Father,"§ conceived in the spirit of God, and bearing the impress of his character.

This estimate of the logical force of miracles (the moral power of those which belong to Christianity is incalculable) appears to be consonant with experience. I conceive that, *in fact*, unbelievers are very seldom convinced by the appeal to the supernatural; that the avenues of admission to Christianity lie usually in quite a different direction; and that the reasons and affections surrender to Christ's spirit, and thus comprehend the thing signified, before they can receive and interpret "*the sign*." Nay, let me put the case home to your own experience. Would you, by this instrumentality, become convinced of that which you before held false? If, before your eyes, a person were to multiply five loaves into five hundred, and then say, "this is to prove the doctrines which I teach, that God is malignant, and that there is no heaven after death,"—should you be converted, and follow him as his disciple? Certainly not; the statement being incredible, the miracle would be powerless. And the inference I would draw is this: that the primitive force of persuasion lies in the moral doctrine as estimated by our reason and conscience, not in the

* Matt. xiii. 58. † John iv. 48. ‡ John x. 32. § John x. 37.

preternatural act displayed before our senses; for, the moment you test their forces, by bringing them into collision, the original convictions of the reason obtain the mastery. It is no answer to say, that such a case is of impossible occurrence. For the purpose to which I apply it, *viz.*, to try an experiment with our own minds, respecting the real argumentative capabilities of miracles, an imaginary case is not only as good as an actual one, but a great deal better: for so long as a good truth and a good miracle are linked together, and move in the same direction, we rest confusedly on the joint support of physical and moral evidence, and are unable to determine which is the ascendant power.

The statements and examples of Scripture tend to the same conclusion. The personal disciples of our Lord returned from a mission on which he had sent them; exclaiming, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." * Yet, though they were possessed of these miraculous powers, their views of the very kingdom which they had gone forth to preach were at this time exceedingly narrow and erroneous,—leading them into acts and desires ambitious, passionate, and false.

Miracles, then, are simply awakening facts: demanding and securing reverential and watchful regard to something, or to everything, in the parties performing them; but not specifically singling out any portion of their doctrinal ideas, and affording them infallible proof. Is it not competent to God thus to draw human attention to a *person*, as well as a truth; —to a *character*, as well as a doctrine? At all events, it is an unwarrantable presumption in us to select for the All-wise the particular motive with which exclusively he ought to create a miracle; instead of humbly noting the actual results, and judging thence of his divine purposes.

But, it will now be urged, whatever sentiments may be entertained respecting the proper inference from miracles in

* Luke x. 17.

general, there is one in particular which directly establishes the plenary inspiration of the apostles and first disciples. It is recorded in the book of Acts, that on the day of Pentecost, when they were with one accord in one place, the Holy Ghost descended upon all.* The two Evangelists, St. Matthew and St. John, were present; so were St. Peter and St. James; for all these were Apostles. And we know that, by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles, the same power passed into all disciples on whom they might choose to confer the privilege. We cannot suppose any of the New Testament authors to have been excluded from this class; and must therefore believe, that every word of the Christian canon was composed under the influence of the Unerring Spirit. This argument is proposed in the following words, by Dr. Tattershall, in his published sermon on the "Nature and Extent of the Right of Private Judgment."

"The Scriptures have been already proved"...."to be a true and authentic history; one of the principal facts of which history is, the outpouring of the gift of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples of Christ. I take, therefore, as an example, the Gospel of St. Matthew, and reason as follows:—I learn, from the history, that Christ's disciples were inspired by the Holy Ghost; among this number was St. Matthew; therefore St. Matthew was inspired; and, consequently, that which he wrote, under this influence of inspiration, is to be regarded as the Word of God. Whereas, on the other hand, if St. Matthew was not inspired, the history relates that which is not true, and the credibility of the whole sacred history is at once destroyed: and, with it, both the Church, and also Christianity itself, must fall to the ground."†

Now to convey, at the outset, a distinct idea of the reason why this argument does not convince me, let me say, that I believe St. Matthew to have been inspired; but I do not believe him to have been infallible. I am sure that he nowhere

* Acts ii. 1—4. † Pp. 236, 237.

puts forth any such claim: and if he does not affirm it himself, I know not who can affirm it for him. Indeed, to the advocates of this doctrine it must seem strange, that even St. John the Divine, instead of bearing down all doubt by this overwhelming claim, should so modestly and carefully conciliate the belief of his readers, by appealing to his own human opportunities of information: "and *he that saw it* bare record, and his record is true:"* "this is the disciple *that testifieth* of these things, and wrote these things:"† and that St. Luke should content himself with saying, at the commencement of his Gospel, that its materials were furnished by those who "from the beginning were eye-witnesses."‡

Everything in this argument clearly depends on the meaning which we are to attach to the phrases "Holy Ghost,"—"Inspiration,"—"Spirit of God,"—and other forms of expression employed to denote this peculiar influence. What, according to the Scriptures, were *the appropriate functions* of this Divine Agent? and are we to include among them an exemption of those, on whom its power fell, from all possibilities of error, in narration, in reasoning, in expectation, in speculative and practical doctrine? In short, do the sacred writers represent this Holy Spirit as conferring intellectual infallibility?

Now the original account of the descent of the Holy Spirit certainly implies nothing of the kind.§ The *gift of tongues*, which St. Paul, though possessed of it in the highest degree,‖ places in the lowest rank of spiritual gifts,¶ and which he expressly discriminates from "the word of wisdom," and "the word of knowledge,"** is the only preternatural effect there ascribed to this new influence. Other passages descriptive of this agency equally fall short of this claim of infallibility. We read, for example,†† that by the direction of

* John xix. 35. † xxi. 24. ‡ Luke i. 2.
§ Acts ii. 1—4. ‖ 1 Cor. xiv. 18. ¶ 1 Cor. xiv. *passim*: especially 4,5,13,19,23.
** 1 Cor. xii. 8, 10. †† Acts vi. 1—4.

the Apostles, seven persons were to be selected from the general body of believers, who were to be men "full of the Holy Ghost, *and wisdom*,"—the two attributes being distinguished. It must be supposed, too, that the qualifications demanded of these officers had some proportionate reference to the duties assigned. These duties were simply the management of the society's financial accounts, and the distribution of its eleemosynary funds. When it is said that John the Baptist should "be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb,"* are we to understand, that from earliest infancy he was infallible?—he who, in the very midst of his ministry, sent to Jesus for information on this question, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?"† —a question, be it observed, which implies doubt on the great subject-matter of the Baptist's whole mission. Perhaps, however, it will be admitted that there are inferior degrees of this inspiration; so that passages like this may be found, in which the phrases denoting it are used in a lower sense. But, it will be said, in its highest intensity it cannot be so restricted, and is even distinctly affirmed to involve infallibility. The operations of the spirit of God are distributed by theologians into two classes,—the extraordinary, experienced by the apostles, and exempting them from liability to error,—the ordinary, which are assured to all true disciples, and whose office implies no further illumination of the understanding, than is needful for the sanctification of the heart. Now if this statement and division be really true and scriptural, we shall doubtless find Christ and his Apostles separating their promises of divine influence into two corresponding sets; keeping things so different, clear of all confusion; and fully as exact in this "discerning of spirits," as their modern disciples. But so far is this from being the case, that between the *greater spirit* of the twelve apostles, and the *less spirit* of the general church, no distinction

* Luke. i. 15. † Matt. xii. 3.

whatever is drawn; nor any between the *intellectual infallibility* which was to await the apostles, and the *spiritual sanctification* promised to the faithful multitude of all ages. Nay, it so happens, that the most unlimited expressions relating to the subject occur in such connexions, that they cannot be confined to the apostles, but obviously apply to all private Christians. For instance, shall we say that our Lord's promise of the "Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost," explained by the remarkable synonym which he appended, "*the spirit of truth,*" which should "*teach them all things,*" and "*lead them into all truth*"—implies universal illumination of the understanding? Close at hand is a clause forbidding the interpretation, by spreading the promise over all ages of the church; "I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, *that he may abide with you for ever, even the spirit of truth;*" * and the expression is accordingly quoted by Dr. Wardlaw, as descriptive of the common operations of the spirit.† Again, St. John in his first *General Epistle* (addressed of course to the whole church) says, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and *ye know all things.*" ‡ Take then the strongest and most unqualified expressions on this subject, and if they prove the infallibility of the apostles, they prove the same of all private Christians. Or, take those which show sanctification to be the characteristic office of the Holy Spirit with respect to the general church, and you show that this also was its agency on the Apostles.

One or two texts are occasionally adduced in defence of this doctrine; their paucity and inapplicability show how slight is the scripture foundation, on which it rests. By far the most remarkable of these is found in 2 Tim. iii. 16. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for

* John xiv. 16, 17, 26.

† Discourses on the principal Points of the Socinian Controversy, p. 341. Disc. xi.

‡ 1 John ii. 20.

reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Now observe,

1. That the verb *is*, which constitutes the whole affirmation here, has nothing corresponding to it in the Greek, and is put in by the English translators. Of course the sentence requires a verb *somewhere*, but the place of its insertion depends on the discretion of the translator. Baxter, Grotius, and other critics, accordingly render the passage thus; "All scripture, given by inspiration of God, is also profitable," &c. The Apostle has already been reminding Timothy of the importance of those scriptures with which he had been acquainted from his youth, to his *personal faith*: and he now adds, that they are *also* useful for his *public teaching*. He therefore simply says that whatever scriptures are given by inspiration of God, are thus profitable.

2. Since Paul first speaks generally of those scriptures with which Timothy had been familiar from his youth, and then proceeds to select from these a certain class, as given by inspiration of God, his description extends to no portion of the New Testament, and only to some writings of the Old. The purpose for which he recommends them, indicates what books were in his thoughts. As they were to aid Timothy in his public duty of convincing his countrymen that Jesus was the Messiah, he refers to those books which had sustained the expectation of a Messiah,—the Jewish Prophets. "The whole extent of his doctrine, I conceive to have been expressed by the Apostle Peter thus: 'prophecy came not in old time by the will of men; but holy men of God spake, moved by the Holy Spirit;' *—that those also who recorded these *speeches*, *wrote* by the Holy Spirit; that, in addition to the superhuman message, there was a superhuman report of it, is a notion of which no trace can be found in the apostolic writings. The whole amount, therefore, of the Apostle's doctrine is this; that the prophets had a preternatural know-

* 2 Pet. i. 21.

ledge of future events; and that their communications were recorded in the prophetic books. By the admission of these points, the theory of *inspired composition* obviously gains nothing." *

No appeal can be more unfortunate for the advocate of plenary inspiration, than to the writings of the great apostle of the Gentiles. Not a trace can be found in them of the cold, oracular dignity,—the bold, authoritative enunciation,—the transcendental exposition, equally above argument and passion, in which conscious and confessed infallibility would deliver its decisions. All the natural faculties of the man are shed forth, with most vehement precipitation, on every page. He pleads with his disciples, as if kneeling at their feet. He withstands Peter to the face,—though no less inspired than himself,—because he was to be blamed for unsound sentiments and inconsistent conduct. He hurries so eagerly, and sinks so deep into an illustration, that scarcely can he make a timely retreat. He too quickly seizes an analogy to apply it with exactitude and precision. And above all, he is incessantly engaged in *reasoning*: and by that very act, he selects as his own the common human level of address,—generously submits his statements to the verdict of our judgment, and leaves that judgment free to accept or to reject them. Nor is it on mere subordinate points that he contents himself with this method, which, by challenging search, abandons infallibility. The great controversies of the infant church, which involved the whole future character of Christianity, which decided how far it should conciliate Polytheism, and how much preserve of Judaism, the apostle

* Unwilling to repeat what I have already said, in a former publication, I have contented myself with a brief and slight notice of this celebrated text. It is discussed in a less cursory manner in the notes to the first Lecture in the "Rationale of Religious Inquiry." I would only add, that Schleusner considers the word θεόπνευστος as belonging, not to the predicate, but to the subject, of the sentence. See his Lexicon in Nov. Test. in verb. "In N. T. semel legitur 2 Tim. iii. 16. πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος, omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata, seu, quæ est originis divinæ."

of the Gentiles boldly confides to reasoning: and his writings are composed chiefly of *arguments*, protective of the Gospel from compromise with Idolatry on the one hand, and slavery to the Law on the other.

Nor is this denied by any instructed divine of any church. In insisting "upon the duty of professed Christians to abstain from all compliance with the idolatrous practices of the heathens around them," says Dr. Tattershall, "St. Paul, even though an inspired Apostle, does not proceed upon the mere dictum of authority, but appeals to the *reason* of those to whom he writes; and calls upon them to reflect upon the inconsistency of such conduct, with the nature of their Christian profession. In fact, he produces *arguments*, and desires them to weigh the reasons which he assigns, and see whether they do not fully sustain the conclusion which he draws from them. 'I speak,' says he, 'as to *wise* men, JUDGE YE what I say.'"*

If then the Apostle wrote his letters under inspiration, have we not here direct authority to sit in judgment on the productions of inspiration, or *the contents of the word of God;* not merely to learn what is said, but to consider its inherent reasonableness and truth? No one, indeed, can state more forcibly than Dr. Tattershall himself the principle, of which this conclusion is only a particular case. "When I reason with an opponent," says he, "I do *not* invade his acknowledged right of private judgment, nor do I require of him to surrender that judgment to me. I am, in fact, doing the precise *contrary* of this. I am, *by the very act of reasoning*, both *acknowledging* his right of judgment, and making an *appeal* to it."†

To acknowledge the right of judgment, is to forego the claim of infallibility, and to concede the privilege of dissent;

* Sermon on the Nature and Extent of the Right of Private Judgment, p. 238.

† P. 249.

and thus frankly does St. Paul deal with me. Vainly do his modern expounders attempt to make him the instrument of their own assumptions. To appeal to my reason, and then, if I cannot see the force of the proof, to hold me up as a blasphemer and a rebel against the word of God, is an inconsistency, of which only the degenerate followers of the great Apostle could be guilty. His writings disown, in every page, the injurious claims which would confer on them an artificial authority, to the ruin of their true power and beauty. In order to show the absolute divine truth of all that may be written by an inspired man, it is not enough to establish the *presence* of inspiration, you must prove also the *absence* of every thing else. And this can never be done with any writings made up, like the Apostle's, of a scarce-broken tissue of argument and illustration. It is clear that he was not forbidden to reason and expound, to speculate and refute, to seek access, by every method of persuasion, to the minds he was sent to evangelize; to appeal, at one time to his interpretation of prophecy, at another to the visible glories of creation, and again to the analogies of history. Where could have been his zeal, his freshness, his versatility of address, his self-abandonment, his various success, if his natural faculties had not been left to unembarassed action? And the moment you allow free action to his intelligence and conscience, you inevitably admit the possibilities of error, which are inseparable from the operations of the human mind. To grant that Paul reasons, and be startled at the idea that he may reason incorrectly,—to admit that he speculates, and yet be shocked at the surmise that he may speculate falsely,—to praise his skill in illustration, yet shrink in horror when something less apposite is pointed out, is an obvious inconsistency. The human understanding cannot perform its functions without taking its share of the chances of error; nor can a critic of its productions, have any perception of their truth and excellence, without conceding the possibility of fal-

lacies and faults. We must give up our admiration of the Apostles as men, if we are to listen to them always as oracles of God.

But I must proceed to my last argument, which is a plain one, founded upon facts, open to every one who can read his Bible. I state it in the words of Mr. Thirlwall: "the discrepancies found in the Gospels, compel us to admit that the superintending control of the Spirit was not exerted to exempt the sacred writings altogether from errors and inadvertencies;"* nay, he speaks of 'the more rigid theory of inspiration' having been so long 'abandoned by the learned on account of the insuperable difficulties these opposed to it,' that it would now be a waste of time to attack it."†

I heard it affirmed on Wednesday evening, that, in the sacred writings, no case can possibly occur of self-contradiction or erroneous statement; that the very idea of inspiration, is utterly opposed to all supposition of the presence of error; that the occurrence of such a blemish would prove, that the writer was not *so* under the immediate teaching and superintendence of Almighty God as to be preserved from error; or, in other words, that he was not inspired; that the erroneous passage must indeed be rejected, but, with it, the whole work in which it is found, as destitute of divine authority. I have brought Mr. Thirlwall to confront the question of fact;—let me quote Dr. Paley in relation to this statement of principle. "I know not," he says, "a more rash or unphilosophical conduct of the understanding, than to reject the substance of a story, by reason of some diversities in the circumstances with which it is related. The usual character of *human testimony* (Dr. Paley is discussing the discrepancies between the several Gospels) is, substantial truth under circumstantial variety." "On the contrary, a close and minute

* Schleiermacher's Critical Essay on the Gospel of St. Luke. Introduction by the Translator, p. xv.

† Pp. xv. and xi.

agreement induces the suspicion of confederacy and fraud."* If both these statements be true, the phenomena of inspiration would be identical with those of confederacy and fraud. I estimate the Scriptures far too highly to hesitate, for a moment, about pointing out to your notice certain small variations and inconsistencies, utterly destructive of the doctrine of plenary inspiration; but absolutely confirmatory, in some instances, of the veracity of the historians, and, in all, compatible with it. Our faith scorns the insinuation, that these sacred writings require "any forbearance from the boasted understanding of man."

1. The different Evangelists are at variance with each other, with respect to the calling of the first Apostles. They differ with respect to the *time*, the *place*, the *order*; e. g.:

First, as to *time*; Matthew† represents the imprisonment of John the Baptist as the occasion of our Lord's beginning to preach, and as preceding the call of any Apostles.

John‡ represents Andrew and Simon, Philip and Nathanael, as called,—the miracle at Cana as wrought, a Passover as attended at Jerusalem,—a residence of Jesus and his disciples in the rural district of Judæa, as going on; and then adds, "for John was not yet cast into prison."

Next, as to *place*; according to Matthew and Mark,§ Andrew and Peter are called by the Lake of Galilee; according to John, in Judæa.

And as to *order*; Matthew and Mark represent the two pairs of brothers, as *successively* called: first, Andrew and Peter; then, after a short interval, James and John.

Luke,‖ making no mention of Andrew, represents the others as simultaneously called.

John represents Andrew as called with himself; and Peter, as subsequently called, through the instrumentality of his brother Andrew. Of James, (though affirmed by the other

* Evidences of Christianity, Part III. ch. i.

† Matt. iv. 12—22. ‡ John i. 35—51. § Mark i. 16—20. ‖ Luke v. 10, 11.

Evangelists to have been his own companion in the call,) he is silent.

The three first writers not being present, it is nothing wonderful that they are less accurate than the fourth, who was.

2. The three denials of Peter, as recorded by the first, third, and fourth Evangelists, will be found inconsistent in their minute circumstances. The denials are uttered,

according to Matthew,*
1. to a maid.
2. to another maid.
3. to those who stood by.

according to Luke,†
1. to a maid.
2. to a man.
3. to another man.

according to John,‡
1. to the maid who admitted him.
2. to the officers of the palace.
3. to a man (a relation of Malchus).

3. Matthew§ and Luke‖ state, that one Simon bore our Lord's cross to Calvary; John,¶ that Jesus bore it himself.

4. The inscription annexed by Pilate to the cross is given differently by every one of the Evangelists.

Matthew:** "This is Jesus, the king of the Jews."
Mark:†† "The king of the Jews."
Luke:‡‡ "This is the king of the Jews."
John:§§ "Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews."

5. Matthew‖‖ and Mark¶¶ state that our Lord on the cross was reviled by both the malefactors; but Luke*** affirms that

* Matt. xxvi. 69—end. † Luke xxii. 56—62. ‡ John xviii. 15—25.
§ xxvii. 32. ‖ xxiii. 26. ¶ xix. 17.
** xxvii. 37. †† xv. 26. ‡‡ xxiii. 38.
§§ xix. 19. ‖‖ xxvii. 44. ¶¶ xv. 32.
*** xxiii. 39—43.

when one of them was guilty of this shocking mockery, he was rebuked by the other; and that the latter received the well-known assurance, "this day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

6. The last discrepancy which I shall mention, has reference to the final Passover, and its relation to the day of crucifixion. But in order to understand the case, and indeed to read with intelligence the whole series of events connected with the crucifixion and resurrection, it is necessary to bear in mind the following facts:—

(a.) That the Jewish day commenced in the evening, and was reckoned from sunset to sunset.

(b.) That the Jewish Sabbath was the seventh day of the week, and extended from six o'clock on Friday evening, to the same time on Saturday.

(c.) That at the Passover, the paschal lamb was slain at the end of one Jewish day, and eaten immediately, *i. e.*, at the commencement of the next, or about six or seven in the evening. The three hours before sunset, during which it was prepared, were called the *preparation of the Passover*, and belonged to the fourteenth of the month; while the hours after sunset, during which it was eaten, belonged to the fifteenth. The phrase, *preparation of the Sabbath*, was used in like manner, to denote the three hours before sunset every Friday.

(d.) The Passover being fixed to the fifteenth of the *month*, and *that* a lunar month, necessarily moved over all the days of the week; and might fall, of course, into coincidence with the weekly Sabbath.

(e.) The feast of unleavened bread was a festival of seven days' duration, the first day of which coincided with that on which the Passover was eaten, following of course that on which it was killed.

These things being premised, we are prepared to notice the points in which the Evangelists agree, and those in which

they disagree, in their accounts of the crucifixion, and its connected events. They all agree in assigning the same distinguishing incidents of our Lord's personal history to the *four great days of the week*, most interesting to Christians, *viz.*, to the Thursday the last supper; to the Friday, the crucifixion; to the Saturday, the sleep in the sepulchre; to the Sunday, the resurrection. But about the position of the Jewish Passover upon these days, they singularly differ; St. John fixing it on the Friday evening, and making it therefore coincide with the weekly Sabbath; the other three, fixing it on the Thursday evening, and so following it up by the Sabbath. The variance is the more interesting from its influence on our views of the last supper; which, according to the three first Evangelists *was the Passover*, according to the fourth, was *not the Passover*. The institution of the communion, as a Christian transformation of the Jewish Festival, rests entirely on the former of these narratives; St. John is altogether silent respecting it. Yet it was he who leaned on Jesus' bosom, and stood beneath his cross.

Now what is the just inference from such discrepancies? Is it that the writers were incompetent reporters of the main facts? Not so; for there are few biographers, however well-informed, whose testimony, produced in circumstances at all parallel, would not yield, on the application of as severe a test, inconsistencies more considerable. Is it that they are not veracious? Not so; for not a trace of self-interest is discernible in these cases. Is it that they were not inspired? Not so; for the transition they underwent from peasants to apostles, from dragging the lake to regenerating the world, is the sublimest case of inspiration (except one) with which God has refreshed the nations. But it is this; that they were not intellectually infallible.

I have now endeavoured to give some idea of two different ways of regarding the Christian records.

I. They possess an *internal and self-evidence*, in their own

moral beauty and consistency, and the unimaginable perfection of the great Son of God, whom they bring to life before us. With this evidence, which is open to every pure mind and true heart,—which speaks to the conscience like a voice of God without, conversing with the spirit of God within, all those may be content, who think that, *to accept Christ as the image of Deity, and the authoritative model of Duty,* is to be *a Christian.*

II. Those, however, who think that, in order to be Christians, we must hold one only doctrinal creed, containing many things hard to understand, and harder to believe, are aware that nothing short of a divine infallibility can prevail with us to receive a system so repugnant to our nature. And as this is incapable of self-proof, they appeal chiefly to the *external evidence and foreign attestation* which belong to the Christian records; beginning with the historical method, they endeavour to show,

(1.) That we have the original words of the Gospel witnesses (*authenticity*):

(2.) That, this being the case, we have the very Words of God (*plenary inspiration*).

Now let me detain you by one reflection on these two methods. Suppose each, in turn, to prove insufficient, as a basis of Christianity, the other remaining firm; and consider what consequences will result.

If the internal or self-evidence be inadequate, (which our objectors must suppose, for it cannot, they admit, prove their creeds,) then every one must seek a foundation for his faith in the other. He must satisfy himself, *in limine,* of the personal authorship of the books in the Canon; a purely literary inquiry, and one of extraordinary labour, even to those who enjoy every advantage for its prosecution. In order to be saved, doctrines must be embraced, requiring for their proof an inspiration, which does not exist in the New Testament writings, except on the supposition of their *apostolic*

origin. The ascertainment, then, of *this* point, is the necessary prelude to all saving faith; this duty lies on the outermost threshold of our acceptance with the Giver of salvation. So that God hangs the eternal welfare of every man on an investigation so critical and elaborate, that a whole life of research is not too much to understand it, and the most familiar with its details are, by no means, the most uniformly confident of its results; an investigation which assigns a certain date to each book, as the lowest limit of security; and says, if you dare to fix this letter or that Gospel upon a time later by half a century, you are lost for ever!

But may not the young and the ignorant trust in the guidance of a teacher? In his sermon on private judgment, Dr. Tattershall treats of this question, and lays down the following rule:—"In the case of adults, such reliance is justifiable *so far*, and *no farther*, than it is unavoidable. So far as God has not given the ability, or the opportunity of investigation, so far he will not require it; but in whatever degree any person has the power and opportunity of examining the will of God for himself,—in that degree,—whether he exercise his privilege *or not,—God will hold him responsible.* As to the liability to fall into error;—beyond all doubt, such liability exists, whether we submit to the guidance of any teacher, or exercise our own private judgment."* How, let me ask, can we avoid drawing the following inferences?

(1.) That the greater part of mankind must be held to be in a condition rendering this reliance on a teacher "*unavoidable.*"

(2.) For this reliance, then, such portion of mankind must be held *justified in the sight of God.*

(3.) But such dependance makes them liable to err; and must, in fact, have led countless multitudes into error.

(4.) If these errors are fatal to salvation, then *God inflicts eternal torments for the inevitable results of a justifiable act.*

* Pp. 243, 244.

(5.) If these errors are not fatal to salvation, then *there is salvation out of the faith.*

The result, then, of this external system is, that you may be saved on either of two conditions; that you belong to the orthodox literary sect, and hold the antiquarian opinions of the priests; or, that you belong to the ignorant, and can find out the right parties to whom to say, "I will believe, as you believe."

Reverse the supposition. Conceive that in the process, becoming ever more searching, of historical inquiry, the other and external method should be found to be inadequate to the maintenance of its superstructure; what would be the fate of Christianity, trusted solely to its self-evidence? I will imagine even the worst: and suppose that the first three Gospels are shown to be not personally authentic, not the independent productions of three apostolic men; but a compilation of very composite structure, consisting of (we will say) some thirty fragments, obviously from different hands, and all of anonymous origin. In such case, the individual testimony of eye-witnesses being gone, the whole edifice of external proof which supports a dogmatic Christianity, must fall. But the self-evidence of a moral and spiritual Christianity, of a Christianity that clings to the person and spirit of Christ, is not only unharmed, but even incalculably increased. For how often, and how truly, has it been argued, that the mere inspection of the four Gospels is enough to prove the reality of Christ; that the invention, and consistent maintenance, of a character so unapproachable, so destitute of all archetype beneath the skies, so transcending the fictions of the noblest genius, and so unlike them, are things utterly incredible, were they supposed even of one writer: and that, for this same divine image to gleam forth with coincident perfection from four, belongs to the highest order of impossibilities. What then should we say, if these

four were resolved into thirty? The coalescence of so many fragmentary records, could no more make a Christ, than the upsetting of an artist's colours could paint a Raffaelle. Whatever then becomes of Church Christianity, that which lives in Christ, and has the power of love in man, is everlasting as the soul.

We are warned that "the Bible is *not* a shifting, mutable, uncertain thing." We echo the warning, with this addition, that Christianity *is* a progressive thing; not a doctrine dead, and embalmed in creeds, but a spirit living and impersonated in Christ. Two things are necessary to a revelation: its record, which is permanent; its readers, who perpetually change. From the collision of the lesson and the mind on which it drops, starts up the living religion that saves the soul within, and acts on the theatre of the world without. Each eye sees what it can, and what it needs; each age developes a new and nobler idea from the immortal page. We are like children, who, in reading a book above their years, pass innocently and unconsciously over that which is not suited to their state. In this divine tale of Christ, every class and every period seizes, in succession, the views and emotions which most meet its wants. It is with Scripture as with nature. The everlasting heavens spread above the gaze of Herschel, as they did over that of Abraham; yet the latter saw but a spangled dome, the former a forest of innumerable worlds. To the mind of this profound observer, there was as much a *new creation*, as if those heavens had been, for the time, called up and spread before his sight. And thus is it with the Word of God. As its power and beauty develope themselves continually, it is as if Heaven were writing it now, and leaf after leaf dropped directly from the skies. Nor is there any heresy like that, which denies this progressive unfolding of divine wisdom, shuts up the spirit of heaven in the verbal metaphysics and scholastic creeds of a half-barbarous period,—treats the

inspiration of God as a dry piece of antiquity, and cannot see that it communes afresh with the soul of every age; and sheds, from the living Fount of truth, a guidance ever new.

NOTES.

A.

On the Improved Version.

Great allowance must perhaps be made for the clergymen who persist, after repeated expostulation, in their assumption that the Improved Version is an authoritative exposition of Unitarian theology. The convenience of limiting their studies, for the most part, to a single work, and the inconvenience of dispensing with the previous labours of Dr. Nares, and Archbishop Magee, whose hostile criticisms furnish the orthodox divine with invaluable prolegomena to the book, ought to diminish our surprise at the tenacious adherence to this ground of attack. The advantage too of giving fresh currency to the popular notion, that some dreadful production exists, containing unmentionable impieties, and constituting the "Unitarian Bible," is undeniable. It is evident that the utility of fostering this impression is by no means overlooked: for after strong assertion and contemptuous comment have given, to a very few passages of the Improved Version the appearance, to an unlearned audience, of falsification of the word of God, I have heard it said, that these cases are but a *small sample of a system*, which might be illustrated to an indefinite extent from every page. As there are not, on an average, more than two variations in a page from Archbishop Newcome, the charge must, in an incalculable majority of instances, fall on him.

I am at a loss, however, to perceive even any controversial advantage to be gained by the rash statement of Mr. Byrth; that every Unitarian minister is as much bound to uphold the criticism and interpretation of the Improved Version, as the Established Clergy to maintain the thirty-nine articles. A clergyman, it is known, signs the articles, and solemnly contracts to preach in conformity with them; a minister among Unitarians may never see the Improved

Version, or hear its name. During a five years' course of study at the college where I received my education for the ministry, I do not remember any mention of it in the theological classes, and only two in the Greek classes: both of which were condemnatory; one, of the introduction of the English indefinite article to indicate, in certain cases, the absence of the definite article in the original; the other, of the rendering of the preposition διὰ, with the genitive, by the word "for." The fact that most ministers of our persuasion, subscribe to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, which has succeeded to the property in the improved version, and continues to circulate it, no more makes them responsible for its criticisms, than a contribution to the Bible Society makes a clergyman accountable for the forgery of the "heavenly witnesses." The one aids in distributing a possibly defective, the other a certainly interpolated, copy of the Christian records. Let us apply another test to this imprudent parallel between the established clergy, and the Unitarian ministers. In the United States of America, no one, I presume, could take holy orders in the Episcopal church, without pledging his assent to the thirty-nine articles; and should he cease to approve of them, his ordination vow would require him to resign his preferment. But in that country are hundreds of Unitarian ministers, who know nothing of the Improved Version; and would be as much astonished to be told that they were bound by it, as would Dr. Tattershall to hear that he must answer for the Oxford Tracts.

But the mere fact, that within a year after the publication of this work, a Unitarian divine, a subscriber to the Unitarian society, in a Unitarian periodical, submitted it to a criticism far more searching and elaborate than that which an acumen, sharpened by theological hostility, is now able to produce, is sufficient to set in its true light the statement which I have quoted. I beg to call the attention of our Reverend opponents to the following enumeration of the points, to which the censures of the Reviewer (Dr. Carpenter) are directed.

(1.) The selection of Newcome's Revision, instead of the authorized version, as a basis.

(2.) The departure, and without any intelligible rule, from Griesbach's text, which, in the introduction, had been mentioned in a way to excite the expectation of its invariable adoption. Of these departures, a complete table is given.

(3.) The neglect of proper acknowledgement, and defence of these departures.

(4.) The professed employment of brackets for one purpose, (to indi-

cate words which, according to Griesbach, were probably, though not certainly, to be expunged,) and the actual use of them for another; as, for example, in the introduction of St. Matthew's Gospel, which is thus enclosed.

(5.) The use of italics (intended to indicate doubtful authority) without adequate evidence of doubtful authority, and in violation of the apparent intention to repudiate critical conjecture. And in particular, the use of this type in the introduction to St. Luke's gospel; which "the evidence is far too little to justify;" and in the introduction to St. Matthew's gospel. Both these examples are considered by the reviewer as instances of *conjectural criticism*.

(6.) The unwarrantable license allowed in general to conjectural emendation of the text; of which, particular cases are adduced; as the transposition of verses, John i. 15, 18; and, in a lower sense of the word *conjecture*, the omission of διὰ τῆς πίστεως, Rom. iii. 25; and the καὶ in 2 Tim. iii. 16.

(7.) The departures from the received text without notice. Of these departures, a complete table is given.

(8.) The departures from Newcome's Revision, without sufficient notice; of these, a list was given, and a synoptical table has since been published in the appendix to Dr. Carpenter's reply to the "unanswered" Archbishop Magee.

(9.) The use of the English indefinite article, in certain cases, where there is no Greek definite article. For example, the Centurion's exclamation at the crucifixion, Matt. xxvii. 54; in his remarks on which, Mr. Byrth will perceive that he has been anticipated by the reviewer.

(10.) The introduction of doctrinal notes, which the reviewer thinks ought to have been entirely excluded.*

The culpable omission of the epithet, "Unitarian," from the description of the "Society for promoting Christian Knowledge," in the title page of the first edition, has since received the censure of the same friendly but just critic.†

If then, all that is original and "orthodox," in the recent assaults on the improved version, be the sarcasm and extravagance; and all that is "candid" and "scholar-like" was long ago anticipated by a Unitarian divine, (to whom Dr. Nares awards the praise of being "the very learned and dispassionate reviewer,") with what propriety can

* See Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature, 1809, pp. 97, *seqq.*; 152, *seqq.*; 271, *seqq.*; 311, *seqq.*

† Reply to Magee, p. 302.

we be held responsible, as Unitarian ministers, for the peculiarities of the work, and called upon to defend it from strictures, produced at second-hand in Christ Church, and originally published among ourselves. If Dr. Carpenter had been minister in Liverpool, instead of Bristol, would he have been bound to come forward and answer *himself*?

I by no means intend to charge the clergymen engaged in this controversy with plagiarism. Their great authority, Archbishop Magee, so completely withheld in his postscript, all notice of his obligations to the Unitarian Reviewer, that a reader may well be excused for not knowing that there was such a person. Nor do I at all doubt the competency of our respected opponents to originate whatever they have advanced, without the aid of any one's previous researches. I simply affirm that they have been anticipated, in a quarter, and to an extent, which disprove their assertions respecting the acceptance and influence of the Improved Version among Unitarians.

For the very same reason, however, that we are not bound to praise this work when faults are fairly attributed to it, neither are we bound to be silent, when merit is unjustly denied it. With the corrections introduced in the fourth and fifth Editions, it has the exclusive honour of accomplishing the following important ends:

(1.) It exhibits the text of the New Testament in the most perfect state, being conformed to Griesbach's second Edition.

(2.) It enables the English reader to compare this critical with the Received text, all their variations being noticed.

(3.) It places before its possessors Archbishop Newcome's Revision, which otherwise would have passed into unmerited oblivion. Wherever it departs from its basis, and advances any new translation, the Primate's rendering is given also; so that the whole extent of the innovation is seen, and free choice afforded to the reader.

When the advocates of the common version shall exert themselves to bring it into accordance with the true text, they will attack the Improved Version, from a safer position. But so long as they leave with this heretical work, the sole praise, among British translations, of showing what the Evangelists and Apostles really wrote, and content themselves with circulating a version containing words and passages, without mark or warning, which they know to be spurious, and in more than one case, to be ancient theological allies of their creed, they are too much open to the charge of availing themselves of detected forgeries, to be entitled to read lectures to others, about reverence for the text. Dr. Tattershall enforces well "the duty of preserving the Canon of

Scripture in its *integrity*." Will he permit me to remind him of the duty of preserving it in its *simplicity*: or is there, in the *bare proposal of curtailment of the volume*, a sinfulness which does not exist in *the practical and persevering maintenance of known interpolation?*

B.

On the Ebionites and their Gospel.

The argument of Mr. Belsham against the authenticity of Matthew's account of the miraculous conception appears to me very unsound: but Dr. Tattershall's criticism upon it, I must think to be altogether unsuccessful; if at least, amid its intricate construction, I have really apprehended the points to which its force is applied. In rejecting this portion of Scripture, Mr. Belsham relies on the authority of the Nazarenes and Ebionites, or early Hebrew Christians: who are affirmed by Epiphanius and Jerome, to have used copies of Matthew's Gospel, without the introductory passages in question.

As the value of this argument depends altogether on the character of the attesting parties and documents, Dr. Tattershall calls in question the respectability of them all; and disparages, first, the ancient Nazarenes and Ebionites themselves; secondly, the testimony, in this matter, of Epiphanius and Jerome; thirdly, the Hebrew gospel or record, which they describe. The positions advanced under every one of these heads, appear to me to be erroneous.

I. Nothing, it is said, can be more incorrect than to admit the claim of the Nazarenes and Ebionites to be regarded as the *original*, or main body of Hebrew Christians. They were a *sect*, at first united, then divided into two; successors of the Judaizing Christians; and after Adrian's destruction of Jerusalem (A. D. 132), *separated* from the general community of the Christian Church.

I certainly had conceived that this *quæstio vexata* of ecclesiastical history, might be considered as set at rest, since the controversy respecting it, between Bishop Horsley and Dr. Priestley; and still more, since the production of many additional *loca probantia* from the Fathers, by Eichhorn, Olshausen, Bertholdt and others, who have engaged in the enquiry respecting the origin of the three first gospels. If, however, the subject is still open to discussion, the principle on which it must be conducted is evident. If, as Dr. Tattershall states, the Nazarenes and Ebionites did not embrace *in extent*, the main body, and *in time*, the original societies, of Jewish believers, it is incumbent on him to find some clear traces of *other* or *earlier*

Hebrew Christians, denominated by some different term, or at all events *excluded from these*. Until such persons are discovered, in the primitive history of the church, the Nazarenes and Ebionites must remain in undisturbed possession of their title as "*The* early Hebrew Christians." Meanwhile, in direct proof of their claim to be so regarded, I submit the following considerations:

(1.) Their name is applied, in a direct definition, to the *whole* of the Jewish Christians. Origen says, "*Those from among the Jews who received Jesus as the Christ,*" were called Ebionites.*

(2.) The characteristic *sentiments* of this "*sect,*" are ascribed to *the early Hebrew Christians generally*. These were, the persuasion of the continued obligation of the Mosaic law, on persons of Jewish birth, and the belief that Christ was a creature, some considering him as simply human, others as preexistent.† Origen says, "Those from among the Jews who have faith in Jesus, have not abandoned their ancient law; for they live in conformity with it, deriving even their name (according to the true interpretation of the word,) from the poverty of the law; for *Ebion*, among the Jews, means *poor*."‡ Origen again says, "And when you observe the belief respecting the Saviour, held by *those from among the Jews who have faith in Jesus*, some supposing that he was of Mary and Joseph, and others that he was of Mary alone and the Holy Spirit, but still without the notion of his Deity, &c."§

(3.) The characteristic *Gospel* of this sect (under its frequent title "Gospel according to the Hebrews") was used *by the Hebrew Christians generally*. Eusebius says; "In this number, some have placed the Gospel according to the Hebrews, which is a favourite

* Καὶ Ἐβιωναῖοι χρηματίζουσιν οἱ ἀπὸ Ἰουδαίων τὸν Ἰησοῦν ὡς Χριστὸν παραδεξάμενοι.—*Contr. Cels.*, lib. ii. c. 1. Op. tom. i. pp. 385 C. 386 A. Ed. Delarue. Paris. 1733.

† Οὗτοι δε εἰσὶν οἱ διττοὶ Ἐβιωναῖοι, ἤτοι ἐκ παρθένου ὁμολογοῦντες ὁμοίως ἡμῖν τὸν Ἰησοῦν, ἢ οὐχ οὕτω γεγεννῆσθαι, ἀλλ' ὡς τοῖς λοιποῖς ἀνθρώποις.—*Contr. Cels.*, lib. v. c. 61. Op. tom. i. p. 625 A.

‡ Οἱ ἀπὸ Ἰουδαίων εἰς τὸν Ἰησοῦν πιστεύοντες οὐ καταλελοίπασι τὸν πάτριον νόμον· βιοῦσι γὰρ κατ' αὐτὸν, ἐπώνυμοι τε κατα τὴν ἐκδοχὴν πτωχειὰς του νόμου γεγενημένοι. Ἐβίων τε κάρ ὁ πτωχὸς παρὰ Ἰουδαίοις καλεῖται.—*Contr. Cels.*, lib. ii. c. 1. Op. tom. i. p. 385.

§ Καὶ ἐπὰν ἴδῃς των ἀπὸ Ιουδαίων πιστευόντων εἰς τον Ιησοῦν την περὶ του σωτῆρος πιστιν, ὅτε μεν ἐκ Μαρίας καὶ του Ιωσὴφ ὀιομενὸν αὐτον εἶναι, ὅτε δὲ ἐκ Μαρίας μὲν μόνης καὶ του θείου πνεύματος, οὐ μην καὶ μετα τὴς περὶ αὐτου θεολογίας, ὄψει ὡς οὗτος ὁ τυφλὸς λέγει, &c.—*Comment. in Matt.*, tom. xvi. c. 12. Op. tom. iii. 13 A.

especially with the Hebrews who receive Christ." * The gospel here given to "the Hebrews who received Christ," is given in the following to the "Ebionites," by the same author. "They (the Ebionites) made use only of that which is called 'the Gospel according to the Hebrews;' the rest they made small account of." †

If these passages be thought sufficient to identify the Ebionites and Nazarenes with the "main body of Hebrew Christians," perhaps the following may be held to prove their early existence; as it states that they presented the Apostle John with a motive for composing his Gospel: Epiphanius says, "When therefore the blessed John comes and finds men speculating about the human nature of Christ,—the Ebionites going astray respecting the genealogy of Christ in the flesh, deduced from Abraham, and by Luke from Adam; and when he finds the Cerinthians and Merinthians affirming his natural birth as a mere man; the Nazarenes too, and many other heresies; coming, as he did, fourth, or in the rear of the Evangelists, he began, if I may say so, to recall the wanderers, and those who speculated about the human nature of Christ, and to say to them, when from his station in the rear, he beheld some declining into rugged paths, and quitting, as it were, the straight and true one, 'whither are you tending, whither are you going, you who are treading a path rugged and obstructed, conducting, moreover, to a precipice? Return, it is not so; the God, Logos, who was begotten of the Father from the beginning, is not from Mary only.'" ‡

* Ἤδη δ' ἐν τούτοις τινὲς καὶ τὸ καθ' Ἑβραίους εὐαγγέλιον κατέλεξαν, ᾧ μάλιστα Ἑβραίων οἱ τὸν Χριστὸν παραδεξάμενοι χαίρουσι.—*Hist. Eccles.*, lib. iii. c. 25. vol. i. pp. 246, 247. Heinichen Lips. 1827.

† Εὐαγγελίῳ δὲ μόνῳ τῷ καθ' Ἑβραίους λεγομένῳ χρώμενοι, τῶν λοιπῶν σμικρὸν ἐποιοῦντο λόγον.—Lib. iii. c. 27. vol. i. p. 252. Both passages are in Jones, Pt. II. ch. 25.

‡ Διὸ καὶ ὁ Ἰωάννης ἐλθὼν ὁ μακάριος, καὶ εὑρὼν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἠσχολημένους περὶ τὴν κάτω Χριστοῦ παρουσίαν, καὶ τῶν μὲν Εβιωναίων πλανηθέντων διὰ τὴν ἔνσαρκον Χριστοῦ γενεαλογίαν, ἀπὸ Αβραὰμ καταγομένην, καὶ Λουκᾶ ἀναγομένην ἄχρι τοῦ Αδὰμ· εὑρων δὲ τοὺς Κηρινθιανοὺς καὶ Μηρινθιανοὺς ἐκ παρατριβῆς αὐτὸν λέγοντας εἶναι ψιλὸν ἄνθρωπον, καὶ τους Ναζωραίους, καὶ ἄλλας πολλὰς αἱρέσεις, ὡς κατόπιν ἐλθὼν, τέταρτος γὰρ οὗτος εὐαγγελίζεται, ἄρχεται ἀνακαλεῖσθαι, ὡς εἰπεῖν, τοὺς πλανηθέντας καὶ ἠσχολημένους περὶ την κάτω Χριστοῦ παρουσίαν, καὶ λέγειν αὐτοῖς (ὡς κατόπιν βαίνων, καὶ ὁρῶν τινας εἰς τραχείας ὁδοὺς κεκλικότας καὶ ἀφέντας την ευθεῖαν καὶ ἀληθινὴν, ὡς εἰπεῖν) Ποῖ φέρεσθε, ποῖ βαδίζετε, οἱ τὴν τραχείαν ὁδὸν καὶ σκανδαλώδη καὶ εἰς χάσμα φέρουσαν βαδίζοντες; ἀνακάμψατε. Οὐκ ἐστιν οὕτως, οὐκ ἔστιν ἀπὸ Μαρίας μόνον ὁ Θεὸς λόγος, ὁ ἐκ πατρὸς ἄνωθεν γεγεννημένος.—*Epiphan. adv. Hæreses.*, Hær. 49 vel 69. § 23. Op. Petav. Colon. 1682. vol. ii. pp. 746, 737.

That the Nazarenes and Ebionites were truly "*the* early Hebrew Christians," must be considered as a fact established by such evidence as the foregoing, till some testimony to the contrary can be produced. That they were the successors of the Judaizing Christians reproved by St. Paul is an assertion destitute of support; for the opponents who troubled the *Apostle of the Gentiles* were distinguished by their pertinacious attempts, as Hebrews, to *force the Mosaic Law on Gentile converts*; whereas, respecting the Nazarenes, Lardner observes, "Divers learned moderns are now convinced of this, and readily allow, that the Jewish believers, who were called Nazarenes, *did not* impose the ordinances of the law upon others, though they observed them as the descendants of Israel and Abraham." *

The application by Epiphanius of the words "*sect*" and "*heretics*" to these believers, does not prove that he was speaking of a *different class* from the early Hebrew Christians; but only that this same class began, in his time, to be spoken of in a different and more disparaging way. He is the first writer, so far as I can discover, who describes them in such reproachful language. On this point Dr. Wall observes: "He styles them heretics, for no other reason that I can see, but that they, together with their Christian faith, continued the use of circumcision and of the Jewish rites; which things St. Paul never blamed in a Jewish Christian, though, in the Gentile Christian, he did: and Epiphanius with the same propriety, as far as I can perceive, might have blamed St. James, bishop of Jerusalem, and those thousands of Jewish Christians with him, concerning whom James said to Paul, 'Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous for the law.'"†

And as to the Nazarenes and Ebionites separating from the general community of the Christian church, after the second destruction of Jerusalem by Adrian, and thus *bringing upon themselves* the opprobrium of heresy, the fact, stated in this form, cannot be proved. From the first, the Hebrew Christians had formed a separate body from the Gentile Christians. But their proportion to the whole body of believers seems to have been for some time too considerable to admit of their being spoken of in contemptuous language. When the Gentile portion of the Church became altogether ascendant, and especially when it furnished all the *ecclesiastical writers*, (one of whose chief functions it has been, in every age, *to call names*,) the Jewish

* Jewish Testimonies, I. Works: Kippis's ed. 4to. vol. iii. p. 484.

† Acts xxi. 20. Wall's Preface to Critical Notes on the N. T. p. 12.

brethren, destitute of all pretensions to philosophy, and free from that ambitious speculative spirit out of which orthodox theology arose, were naturally treated with less respect, and regarded as exceptions to that general union which had consolidated itself independently of them, and at last completely left them out. It does not appear that any further change was wrought by Adrian's destruction of Jerusalem, than necessarily followed from his resolution to exclude, from the new colony which he founded there, all who practised Jewish rites. This imperial determination compelled the withdrawal of the Hebrew Christians to the North of Palestine; and they were replaced by a new church, whose gentile origin and customs qualified its members (under the Emperor's decree) for settlement on the ancient site.

II. Dr. Tattershall disparages the testimony of the witnesses cited in this cause,—Epiphanius and Jerome; and not without good reason, if there should be sufficient proof, *when the whole case is before us*, of his two allegations, *viz.*;

First, That Epiphanius contradicts himself; affirming now the completeness, and then the mutilation, of the Gospel in question.

Secondly, That Epiphanius contradicts Jerome; in asserting, *what "Jerome does not admit,"* the identity of the Ebionite Gospel with that of St. Matthew.

Premising that one and the same work is to be understood as described, by the several titles, "Nazarene Gospel," "Ebionite Gospel," "Gospel according to the Hebrews," "Gospel according to the Twelve Apostles," I would submit that the first of these allegations is more plausible than true, and that the second is wholly untenable.

The contradictory statements of Epiphanius are the following:

(a.) "They (*i. e.* the Nazarenes) have the Gospel of Matthew *most entire* in the Hebrew language among them; for this, truly, is still preserved among them, as it was at first, in Hebrew characters. But I know not whether they have taken away the genealogy from Abraham to Christ."*

(b.) "In that Gospel which they (*i. e.* the Ebionites) have called the Gospel according to St. Matthew, which is *not entire and perfect*,

* Hæres. 29, § 9, as cited by Jones, Part II. ch. 25, and by Dr. Tattershall, p. 39.

but corrupted and curtailed, and which they call the Hebrew Gospel," &c.*

The verbal contradiction between these two passages, is no doubt manifest enough; and in a writer of more accuracy than Epiphanius, might have justified the proposal of Casaubon (approved by Jones) to effect a violent reconciliation, by the conjectural insertion of the negative adverb in the former sentence, which would then describe the document as *not* wholly perfect. But the looseness of this author's style appears to me sufficient to explain the opposition between the statements; which seem indeed, to look defiance at each other, when brought by force, face to face; but which at the intervals of separate composition, may be, by no means, irreconcileable. That in the first, Epiphanius designed the phrase " most entire," to be understood with considerable latitude, is evident from the expression of suspicion which instantly follows, that the genealogy might probably be absent. And if the work in question contained a quantity of matter additional to Matthew's Gospel, while it also *omitted* some of its integral parts; it seems not unnatural that the same writer, who with his thoughts running on its redundancies, had at one time called it a *most full* copy, should at another, when dwelling on its deficiencies, style it an incomplete edition of the first Evangelist. But it is more important to observe, that *on the points* for which the *Editors of the Improved Version* adduce the testimony of Epiphanius, *viz.*, to identify the Gospel of Matthew with that of the Nazarenes and Ebionites, and to attest the absence from this book of the story of the miraculous conception, there is here *no contradiction whatever.* In *both* passages he states the work to be Matthew's, and in *neither,* according to Dr. Tattershall, does he say that the first two chapters were wanting. The harmony then, on these, the only points in dispute, is complete.

(2.) " Jerome," it is said, " does not admit the work in question to be the Gospel of St. Matthew;" which puts him at issue with Epiphanius. Will Dr. Tattershall permit me to lay before him a passage of Jerome, which has been under his eye recently, for he has quoted a sentence from Jones which occurs on the adjacent page; it runs thus. " Matthew, also called Levi, who became from a publican an Apostle, was the first who composed a gospel of Christ; and for the sake of those who believed in Christ among the Jews, wrote it in the Hebrew language and letters; but it is uncertain who it was that

* Hæres. 30, § 13, as cited by Jones, Part II. ch. 25, and by Dr. Tattershall, p. 89.

translated it into Greek. Moreover the Hebrew (copy) itself is to this time preserved in the library of Cæsarea, which Pamphilus, the martyr, with much diligence collected. The Nazarenes, who live in Berœa, a city of Syria, and make use of this volume, granted me the favour of writing it out; in which (Gospel) there is this observable, that wherever the Evangelist either cites himself, or introduces our Saviour as citing, any passage out of the Old Testament, he does not follow the translation of the Seventy, but the Hebrew copies: of which there are these two instances, *viz.*, that 'Out of Egypt I have called my son;'* and that, 'He† shall be called a Nazarene.'" ‡

Here Jerome, I presume, *does* admit the Nazarene Gospel to be that of Matthew; and the harmony on this point, between him and Epiphanius, is complete.

Besides alleging the above contradiction, Dr. Tattershall notices a supposed *variance* (not amounting to inconsistency) between these two Fathers on another point. From a statement of Jerome, he "thinks it may be fairly inferred," that *he knew* the first two chapters of Matthew's Gospel to be wanting in the Nazarene record. But it is denied that Epiphanius gives any countenance to the notion of their absence. Now I conceive that if this statement be precisely reversed, we shall have the true state of the case before us. Epiphanius gives us testimony to the absence, Jerome to the presence, of these chapters in the Nazarene Gospel.

First, as to Epiphanius: he makes the following statements bearing on this point:

(1.) He says that "the beginning of their (the Ebionites') Gospel was this: 'It came to pass in the days of Herod, the King of Judæa, that John came baptizing with the baptism of repentance in the river Jordan.'"§ Is it not evident from this, that the initial event of this narrative was the advent of the Baptist, and that the previous account of the birth of Christ was absent? So, at least, it has been hitherto supposed.

(2.) He says in positive terms, "They have taken away the genealogy from Matthew, and *accordingly* begin their Gospel, as I have above said, with these words; 'It came to pass,' &c. ‖ It cannot

* Matt. ii. 15. † Matt. ii. 23.

‡ Catal. vir. illust. in Matth. Giving Jones's translation, I do not think it necessary to quote the original Latin. See Jones on the Canon, Part ii. ch. 25.

§ Hær. 30, § 13, quoted by Jones' Part II. ch. 25.

‖ Ibid.

be imagined that this will bear any but the common interpretation, that the Gospel began with the substance of our third chapter. The introduction of the miraculous conception, after John's mission, would be an incredible disturbance of arrangement.*

(3.) He says, "That Cerinthus and Carpocrates, using this same Gospel of theirs, would prove from the beginning of that Gospel according to Matthew, *viz.* by its genealogy, that Christ proceeded from the seed of Joseph and Mary." But to what purpose would this heretic have put this construction upon the genealogy, and argued from it the mere humanity of Christ's origin, if it was immediately followed by a section, flatly contradicting what they had been labouring to prove? It is impossible then to get rid of Epiphanius's testimony to the absence of these chapters.

Secondly, let us turn to Jerome. Dr. Tattershall conceives that because this author speaks of certain men without the spirit and grace of God, as having had some concern in the composition of this gospel, we may conclude that the introductory chapters were wanting from the copy which he used. The inference is not very obvious; and is at once destroyed by the fact, that Jerome's quotations from the Nazarene Gospel, contain passages of Matthew's introductory chapters. In a passage, *e. g.*, which I have adduced above, occur two instances; "Out of Egypt I have called my son;" and, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

This discrepancy between these two Fathers would have furnished Dr. Tattershall with a more powerful argument against the Editor's note, than any which he has adduced; and have enabled him to show that Jerome, being cited for one purpose, establishes precisely the reverse.

III. Dr. Tattershall adduces in evidence against the worth of the Nazarene Gospel, the absurd chronological mistake in its first sentence, which assigns the Baptist's appearance to the days of Herod, king of Judæa.

On this I have only to observe, that it might have been well to state, that the blunder is commonly attributed to Epiphanius himself, rather than to the Gospel which he cites. Whatever that work may have been, it was produced near the spot where the Herods lived, in times when the remembrance of them was fresh, for the people over whom they reigned; so that a mistake of that magnitude, in its first verse, must be regarded as of improbable occurrence. On the other

* See Eichhorn's Einleitung in das N. T. I., § 8; Leipzig, 1820.

hand, Epiphanius, it is admitted, *had never seen this Gospel*, and therefore cited it from hearsay; he wrote in the latter part of the fourth century, and is remarkable for inaccuracy of every kind, and especially with regard to time. There is then no improbability in the supposition that Epiphanius confounded Herod the king, with Herod the tetrarch, and with the purpose of explanation, inserted a mistake, by adding the words, "King of Judæa." Eichhorn says, "Two different Herods are confounded together,—the King Herod under whom John was born, and Herod Antipas, under whom the Baptist publicly appeared;—an evident mark of a later annotating or correcting hand, unguided by a knowledge of the true chronology, as contained in Luke, and so substituting one Herod for another." * For the foregoing reasons, it appears to me that Dr. Tattershall has not, by making his strictures sound, earned the right to render them severe.

The evidence bearing upon the introduction of Luke's gospel, is much simpler and less confused; and to Dr. Tattershall's estimate of it, no valid objection, I think, can be urged.

C.

On the Chronological Inconsistency between the introductory chapters of Matthew, and those of Luke.

In his note on this subject, Dr.Tattershall points out, as an example of carelessness in the Editors of the Improved Version, the following discrepancy between two of their statements. In their note on Matthew i. 16, they say, "If it be true, as Luke relates, that 'Jesus was entering upon his thirtieth year, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius';" and in their note on Luke i. 4, they say, "The Evangelist (Luke) *expressly affirms* that Jesus *had completed* his thirtieth year," &c. It would have been only just to add, that in the more recent editions of the Improved Version, this inconsistency does not exist. The fourth edition (1817) lies before me; and in it the later note stands thus; "The Evangelist expressly affirms that Jesus had entered upon, or as Grotius understands it, had completed his thirtieth year," &c.

To all the other strictures contained in Dr. Tattershall's note,

* Einleitung in das N. T., I, § 8, 31; Leipzig, 1820. See also Evidences of the Genuineness of the Gospels, by Andrews Norton, Note A, sec. V. i. Boston, U. S., 1837.

"the Unitarian Editors" appear to me to be justly liable.* The inaccuracy of their chronology, was long ago perceived, by more friendly critics than their present assailants; and sounder calculations of the dates of our Lord's birth, and ministry, were instituted and published by Dr. Carpenter, in the admirable dissertation prefixed to his "Apostolical Harmony of the Gospels." Not being aware of any method, at all satisfactory, by which the notes in the "Improved Version," referring to this point, can be defended, I do not profess to understand why they appear again and again without remark or correction, in the successive editions of that work.

Dr. Tattershall, I perceive, adopts the usual mode of reconciling the chronology of Matthew and Luke; and supposes that the reign of Tiberius must be reckoned, not from his succession to the dignity of Emperor, on the death of Augustus, but from his previous association with Augustus, in the tribunitial authority. Widely as this explanation has been adopted, it cannot be denied that it has been invented to suit the case; that such a mode of reckoning would never have been thought of, had it not been for this discrepancy between the two Evangelists; and that it has nothing to support it but the evidence which belongs to all hypotheses, viz., that if true, it removes the difficulty which it was designed to explain. Even the industry of Lardner has failed to present us with any instance in which a Roman historian has reckoned the reign of Tiberius, from this association with his predecessor; or with any distinct trace that such a mode of computation was ever employed. And it is notorious that all the Christian Fathers calculated the fifteenth year of Tiberius from the death of Augustus. Should Dr. Tattershall be in possession of any evidence in support of this mode of reckoning, more satisfactory, than that which has hitherto been adduced, he would render an important service to biblical literature by producing it.

D.

It is so universally understood that we are indebted to Mr. Thirlwall for the admirable translation of Schleiermacher's Essay, that I conceive there can be no impropriety in speaking of the work, as his;

* There is a misprint in Dr. T.'s note, p. 104. The sentence at the end of the third paragraph should close thus; "nine months *after* that event, on one calculation, or three months *before* it, on the other."

though his name does not appear in the title-page ;—a circumstance of which I was not aware, till making this extract for the press. The whole note from which are taken the words in the Lecture, is as follows :—"The arguments by which Hug attempted to reconcile the two Evangelists on the residence of Joseph, are extremely slight and unsatisfactory. He admits that St. Matthew supposes Bethlehem to have been Joseph's usual dwelling-place. But, he asks, was St. Matthew wrong? This however is not the question, but only whether he is consistent with St. Luke. Now, nothing can be more evident than that, according to the account of the latter, Joseph was a total stranger at Bethlehem. Bethlehem was indeed, as Hug remarks, *in one sense* his own city, but clearly not in the sense that Matthew's account supposes. Here too, therefore, Schleiermacher's position seems to remain unshaken."—(See note on p. 44, of Translation of Schleiermacher's Critical Essay on St. Luke's gospel.)

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CHRISTIANITY

NOT THE PROPERTY OF CRITICS AND SCHOLARS;

BUT

THE GIFT OF GOD TO ALL MEN.

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN

PARADISE STREET CHAPEL,

LIVERPOOL,

ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1839.

BY

REV. JOHN HAMILTON THOM.

BEING THE THIRD OF A SERIES, TO BE DELIVERED WEEKLY, IN ANSWER TO A COURSE OF LECTURES AGAINST UNITARIANISM, IN CHRIST CHURCH, LIVERPOOL, BY THIRTEEN CLERGYMEN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

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LECTURE III.

CHRISTIANITY NOT THE PROPERTY OF CRITICS AND SCHOLARS; BUT THE GIFT OF GOD TO ALL MEN.

BY REV. JOHN HAMILTON THOM.

"FOR GOD WHO COMMANDED THE LIGHT TO SHINE OUT OF DARKNESS, HATH SHINED IN OUR HEARTS, TO GIVE THE LIGHT OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GLORY OF GOD, IN THE FACE OF JESUS CHRIST."

2 Cor. iv. 6.

No fact can be more extraordinary than that a Revelation from God should give rise to endless disputes among men, that "light" should produce the effects of "darkness," causing confusion and doubt. A Revelation in which nothing is revealed! A Revelation that occasions the most bitter controversies upon every question and interest it embraces! A Revelation that perplexes mankind with the most uncertain speculations, and splits the body of believers into sects and divisions too numerous to be told! A Revelation in which nothing is fixed, in which every point is debated and disputed from the character of God to the character of sin! A Revelation which is so little of a Revelation, that after nearly two thousand years the world is wrangling about what it means: this surely is a fact that demands an explanation, which should make the Believer pause and ask whether he may not be guilty, by some dogmatism about what he calls essentials, of casting this discredit upon Revelation, making the very word a mockery to the Unbeliever, who inquires in simplicity

"what is *revealed?* I find you disputing about everything and arguing about nothing;" and to whom the Believer is certainly bound to render an account of this strange state of things, before he condemns his infidelity. Can any two ideas be more opposed, more directly inconsistent, than Christianity considered as a Revelation, a gift of LIGHT from God, and Christianity as it exists in the world—the most dark and perplexed, the most vexed and agitated of all subjects, no two parties agreeing where the light is, or what the light is, or who has it? Surely if Christianity is a Revelation, the things it has *revealed* must constitute the essence of the Revelation, and not the things which it has left *unrevealed.* Surely the illumination from God must be in the clear Truths communicated, and not in the doubtful controversies excited. Surely it is a mockery of words to call that a Revelation upon which there is no agreement even among those who accept the Revelation. A Revelation is a certainty, and not an uncertainty: and therefore we must strike out of the class of revealed truths every doctrine that is disputed among Christians. Many of these doctrines, we may possess other and natural means of determining; but it is clear that that which is so far *unrevealed* as to be constantly debated among believers themselves, cannot yet be *revealed* by God. Now the UNITY of God is not one of these debated points. All Christians regard it as revealed; and therefore *it* remains as a part of the Revelation. But the doctrine of the Trinity, an addition to the Unity, and as some think a mode of the divine Unity, *is* a disputed point; it does not manifest itself to all believers; it does not make a part of the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; Christ's life would teach no man that there are three persons in the Godhead—neither would Christ's words; the doctrine is not anywhere stated in Scripture; it is deduced by a process of fallible reasonings from a number of unconnected texts, doubtful both in their

criticism and in their interpretation; it is not a declaration made by God, but an inference drawn by man, and, as many think, incorrectly drawn; the doctrine of the Trinity therefore, whether true or not, cannot be regarded as a *revealed* Truth; what is still a subject of controversy cannot be a portion of Revelation. If then, turning away from our disputes, we could ascertain the universal ideas which Christianity implants in *all* minds which receive it; the images of God, of Duty, and of Hope, which it deposits in *all* hearts; the impression of Christ taken off by every spirit of man from the Image and Son of God;—these would be the essentials of the Revelation, for since these are the only uniform impressions that Christianity has actually made upon those who believe it, we must suppose that these were the chief impressions which God intended it to make. This alone can be "the light which, coming into the world, lighteth every man."

But I may be answered here, that Christianity itself is a matter of debate, and that if doubtful things cannot be revealed, then Christianity itself is not a Revelation. To this I reply, that Christianity is a matter of debate chiefly because Christ himself is not offered to the hearts of men, because controversialists thrust forward their own doctrinal conceptions as the essentials of Christianity, presenting *themselves*, and not Jesus to make his own impression on the heart. If not creeds, but Jesus the Christ was offered spiritually to the souls of men, unbelief would be soon no more. No earnest and pure mind would reject from its love and faith the serene and perfect image of the living Jesus. Men can deny metaphysical doctrines: but they could not deny the spiritual Christ. The spirit of God in every man would bear witness to *him* who was the fulness of that spirit, and would recognize the heavenly leadership of the Son of God. If the essentials of Christianity had not been made by Divines and Theologians to consist in disputed doctrines, if it had been offered to faith on the ground of its inherent excellence, its ample attractions

for our spiritual nature, how readily, how universally would it have been received by all who felt that it had echoes within the soul, and that Jesus was indeed the brightest image of God, and the very ideal of humanity! Who would not be a Christian, if to be a Christian required faith only in such truths as these:—that the holy and affectionate Jesus was the human image of the mind of God, and that the Universal Father is more perfect and more tender than his holy and gentle child, by as much as Deity transcends humanity; that the character of the Christ is God's aim and purpose for us all, the result at which He desires each of us to arrive through the discipline and sufferings of Earth;—that traces of Immortality were upon that heavenly mind; that his profound sympathy with the Spirit of God, the surrender of his own immediate interests for the sake of the purposes and drift of providence, the identification of himself with the will of God, the constant manifestation of a style of thought and action drawn on a wider scale than this present life, and that placed him in harmony with better worlds,—that these marked him out as a being whose nature was adjusted to more glorious scenes, whose soul was out of proportion to his merely earthly and external lot, and whose appropriate home must be the pure Heaven of God? Would any one refuse admission to these spiritual views as they are given off to our souls from the pure life of Jesus, if he was permitted to receive them from Christ himself, and not obliged on his way to that Heavenly Image of grace, liberty, and truth, to stoop his free neck to the yoke of Churches and of Creeds. But men preach themselves, not Christ. They embody their own conceptions of Christianity in formulas, and pronounce these to be essentials, instead of suffering Jesus to make his way to the heart, and stamp there his own impression. Hence the origin of unbelief. I quote the words of an eminent Unitarian, himself converted from orthodoxy chiefly by the rce of the argument I am about to state: "Settle your

disputes (says the unbeliever), and then I will listen to your arguments in defence of Christianity. Both of you, Romanists and Protestants, offer me salvation on condition that I embrace the Christian faith. You offer me a sovereign remedy, which is to preserve me alive in happiness through all eternity; but I hear you accusing each other of recommending to the world, not a remedy but a *poison;* a poison, indeed, which, instead of securing eternal happiness, must add bitterness to eternal punishment. You both agree that it is of the *essence* of Christianity to accept certain doctrines concerning the manner in which the Divine Nature exists; the moral and intellectual condition in which man was created; our present degradation through the misconduct of our first parents; the nature of sin, and the impossibility of its being pardoned except by pain inflicted on an innocent person; the existence or non-existence of living representatives of Christ and his apostles; a church which enjoys, collectively, some extraordinary privileges in regard to the visible and invisible world; the presence of Christ among us by means of transubstantiation, or the denial of such presence; all this, and much more, some of you declare to be contained in, and others to be opposed to, the Scriptures; and even here there is a fierce contention as to whether those Scriptures embrace the whole of that Christianity which is necessary for salvation, or whether tradition is to fill up a certain gap. I am, therefore, at a loss how to account for the invitation you give me. To me (the unbeliever might continue) it is quite evident that the ablest opponents of Christianity never discovered a more convincing argument against REVELATION in general, than that which inevitably arises from your own statements, and from the controversies of your churches. God (you both agree), pitying mankind, has disregarded the natural laws fixed by himself, and for a space of four thousand years, and more, has multiplied miracles for the purpose of acquainting men with the means of obtaining

salvation, and avoiding eternal death, *eternal death* signifying almost universally, among you, *unending torments*. But when I turn to examine the result of this (as you deem it) *miraculous and all-wise plan*, I find it absolutely incomplete; for the whole Christian world has been eighteen centuries in a perpetual warfare (not without great shedding of blood), because Christians cannot settle what is that faith which alone can save us. Have you not thus demonstrated that the revelation of which you boast cannot be from God? Do you believe, and do you wish me to believe, that when God had decreed to make a *saving truth* known to the world, he failed of that object, or wished to make Revelation a snare?"*

Now not believing that Revelation has failed of its object, or that it is a snare, and believing that under all the so-called Essentials, which we regard as mere human additions, there is yet a true and universal impression received from the spirit of Jesus, believing in fact that our Controversies are about accidentals, and that under all our differences there is, deeper down, the untroubled well of Christ springing up into everlasting life, I would proceed to expose those errors in the Trinitarian conception of Revelation which have laid it open to the charge of *not being a Revelation*, of dividing mankind by Controversies instead of uniting them by moral Certainty,—and to contrast this Trinitarian Conception of Revelation with what, for the following reasons, we hold to be the *true one*, because it represents God as accomplishing what, from the very nature of a Revelation, he must have intended to accomplish, namely, the communication of moral and spiritual knowledge; because it removes the materials for doctrinal strife and controversial rancour which never could have been God's object in sending a Revelation, but which are inseparable from Trinitarian ideas of Revelation; and because it would realize that union for which Christ prayed and

* "Heresy and Orthodoxy," by Rev. J. B. White, pp. 8, 9.

Apostles intreated, a moral oneness with God as revealed in Jesus, a unity *of spirit* in the bond of peace.

Let us suppose, then, God having the design to send a Revelation to Mankind. There are two methods, either of which He might adopt in the execution of that intention. He might send them a written Revelation in the form of a Book: or He might send them a living Revelation in the form of a Man. He might announce to them His Will through *words*: or He might send to them *one of like nature with themselves*, who would actually work the Will of God before their eyes; one who, passing through their circumstances of life and death, would show them in his own person the character which God intended this present discipline to create; and who, appearing again after death, morally unchanged, and passing into the Heavens, would reveal to them, by these his own destinies, the unbroken spiritual connexion of the present with the future, and the immortal home which God has with Himself for the spirits of those holy ones who are no more on Earth. In the first case, then, we suppose God to send a verbal Message to men, a communication by words teaching doctrines, spoken first, and afterwards committed to writing: in the second case we suppose that a pure and heavenly being manifesting the will and purposes of God through his own nature, which is also our nature, is *himself the divine Message* from our Father; one who walks this earth amidst our sorrows and our sins,—transfiguring the one and reclaiming the other—and gathering up into his own soul the strength that is to be derived from both;—who enters our dwellings, sheds through them the divine light of heavenly love, plants the hope of immortality in the midst of trembling, because loving and dying, beings, and binds together the perishing children of Earth in the godlike Trust of imperishable affections which Death can glorify but cannot kill;—who places himself in our circumstances of severest trial, and shows us the energy of a filial heart, and the unquenchable brightness

of a spirit in prayerful communion with the God of Providence; who, that he might be a revelation of a heavenly mind amidst every variety of temptation, passed on his way to death, through rudest insults, and showed how awful a thing is moral greatness, how calm, how majestic, how inaccessible, how it shines out through aggressive coarseness, a mental and ineffaceable serenity, a spirit that has its glory in itself, and cannot be touched;—who, having showed man how to live and to suffer, next showed him how to die;—who in the spirit and power of Duty subdued this garment of throbbing flesh to the will of God, and in the death agonies was self-forgetful enough to look down from the cross in the tenderest foresight for those he left behind, and to look up to Heaven, presenting for his murderers the only excuse that heavenly pity could suggest,—"Father forgive them! they know not what they do;"—and who having thus glorified God upon the earth, and finished the work given him to do, was himself glorified by God; taken to that Heaven which is the home of goodness;—thus showing the issues to which God conducts the tried and perfected spirit, that His Faithfulness is bound up with the destinies of those that trust Him, and that His providence is the recompense of the just, who live now by Faith.

Now the first thing that will strike you in comparing these two possible methods of a Revelation is, that the written communication containing doctrines is cold, formal, indistinct and distant, when contrasted with the living presence of a pure and heavenly being, who places himself at our side, enters into our joys and sorrows, shows us in action and in suffering the will of God reflected on every form of life, and works out before our eyes the vast idea of perfection. No message, no written document, no form of words, could leave such distinct impressions or quicken such sympathy and love, as the warm and breathing spirit who entered into communication with us, whose influences we felt upon our

trembling souls, whose eye penetrated and whose voice melted us, and who took us by the hand and showed us how children of God should prove their filial claim, and through the vicissitudes of a Father's providence pass meekly to their Home.

Such a living Revelation could of course be preserved for *posterity* only through the medium of written records, but then these records would be chiefly descriptive; and their grand purpose would be faithfully to convey to the men of other times the true image of that heavenly being; to re-create him, from age to age, in the heart of life; to introduce the Son of God with the power of reality into the business and the bosom of men; to impress upon the silent page such graphic characters that they give off to the mind animated scenes, and bring the living Christ before the gazing eye; and the written Revelation would perfectly fulfil its mission, when by vivid and faithful narrative, without comment or reflection of its own, it had placed us in the presence of Jesus, and left us, like the disciples of old, to collect our impressions of the Christ as we waited upon his steps, and watched the spirit working into life, and caught the tones of living emotion; when we walked with him through the villages of Galilee, and saw him arrest the mourners, and touch the bier, and restore the only son of the widowed mother; when we retired with him to the lone mountain, and witnessed how the spirit ascended to God before it entered into the conflicts of temptation; when we stood with him in the Temple Court, and beheld how much more noble than the Temple is the Spirit that sanctifies the Temple, and how the Priest in his own strong hold quailed and trembled under the thrilling tones and simple majesty of Truth; when we followed him to his home, not neglecting to observe how his eye, that was never cold to goodness, fell upon the widow and her mite as he left the Temple; when we leaned with the loved disciple on his bosom, and watched his last offices, and listened, with hushed hearts, for his last words; when we

saw him kneel at the disciples' feet, that the spirit of equality and brotherhood might enter into their hearts, and break the bread of remembrance and distribute the parting cup,—that bound up with such symbols of self-sacrifice, he, the living Christ, might come back in moments of severe Duty, and pour his own spirit of self-denial through deathless memories; when we listened to his last prayers and consolations, and observed that, in that awful pause between life and death, he was the comforter; when we watched with him in Gethsemane's garden, and beheld the tears of nature, the holy one and the just, beneath the awe of his mission, trembling and melted before God; when we stood by him in Pilate's hall, and saw the moral greatness of the unassailable spirit unobscured by bitterest humiliation; when we drew nigh to his cross, and witnessed the crown placed upon a glory that in mortal form could rise no higher — "It is finished." To place us by its vivid descriptions in such communication with Jesus himself, is the great purpose of the historical record of Christianity; and in proportion as it makes this intercourse real and intimate, does the New Testament become to us the instrument and vehicle of a Revelation. Without this reproduction in our hearts of Jesus, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, the Scriptures are but a dead letter, barren symbols, perverted to mere verbal and logical uses, that awake no life, and serve no spiritual purpose.

The next observation that could not fail to strike you in contrasting the two methods of Revelation which I have supposed, a written communication containing doctrines, and a living character representing the will of God, is the great uncertainty and liability to *various* interpretations of the written method of Revelation when compared with the acted Revelation, the will of God embodied in Christ Jesus. Nothing is so unfixed as the meaning of words; nothing is so fixed as the meaning of actions. Nothing is so vague as language;

nothing is so definite as character. You may fail to collect the exact ideas of a written communication; but you *cannot fail to understand* a living, feeling, acting, suffering, and dying man, who, on his own person, works out the will of God before your eyes; and, instead of communicating with you through writing, communicates with you through a character that can have no two meanings, and that requires no doubtful application of scientific rules of interpretation to make it plain. Place me in the presence of Christ, and the Revelation is impressing itself on my answering heart, and exhibiting itself before my living eyes. Place me before some lengthened statement in words, and I may draw from them a variety of senses, and perhaps fix upon, as their true sense, one that their Author did not intend. Who will protect me from error in all my applications of the difficult science of interpreting words? How, for instance, shall I be certain that I do not impress my own limited conceptions upon the most solemn and inspired language? How shall I rise through words, which are mere symbols, to conceptions, which, not being in my own soul, mere words do not suggest? If I saw a living being embodying these sublime conceptions before me, or read a description of him that brought him vividly before the soul, then the words would be no longer clothed with my poor meanings, but would bring before me the living forms of goodness and of greatness into which they expanded when represented by that heavenly mind. To illustrate my meaning by a single instance: Jesus said, "Love your enemies." Now how poor would be my conception of that duty, if I had only these words, if I had not his own acted interpretations of their fulness, if I could not stand by his cross, and witness his own exhibition of this heavenly spirit. The precept would be narrowed to my own littleness if I had not the illustration of the living Christ. It is possible to put a limitation upon the revelation of mercy as it is written in the dead words: it is not possible to put any limi-

tation on "the word made flesh," the Revelation of Mercy breathing from the dying Jesus. Such then is the greater clearness, and freedom from uncertainty, of the meaning of God, when that meaning is revealed on the person of a living being, than when it is a statement of Doctrines expressed through a medium so indefinite, so susceptible of a variety of interpretations, as written language.

That there is a distinct branch of study called the Art of Interpretation; that its principles are derived from the profoundest acquaintance with the Mind; that it is in fact a practical Metaphysics, which even, when most fully understood, requires, for its correct application to ancient writings, the most varied and extensive knowledge, and the utmost natural acuteness, disciplined by long practice,—these things, which every one knows, scholar or no scholar, are standing and undeniable proofs of the inherent ambiguity of language, of the variety of meanings, which no skill in the use of words can possibly prevent, and out of which we have to make a selection of some one, when we apply ourselves to interpret a document. Now were I to enter into a full enumeration of the considerations that should determine an interpreter of the New Testament, and out of all the possible meanings direct his selection of that one which he adopts, I should have to present you with a disquisition on perhaps the most profound and difficult department of literary inquiry. I should have to speak of Archæology and original languages, themselves, even in their most general character, the study of a life; I should have to speak of one form of those original languages, peculiar and a study in itself, the Hellenistic Greek, in which the New Testament is written, and in the interpretation of which we are left without the aid that is derived from the usages of language by other authors: I should have to speak of the particular writer whose words we were examining, of the character of his mind, of the peculiarities of his style, whether he wrote oratorically or scientifically, whether

we were to tame down his metaphors, or whether we were to regard them as literally descriptive; I should have to speak of the age and country in which he lived, of the state of opinion and philosophy in his times, of the colourings which his words or thoughts were likely to adopt from the then prevailing theories, of the particular purpose for which he was writing, and of the particular minds, their circumstances and states of knowledge to which the writing was addressed; and after all this I could not allow any man, however erudite, to be a competent Interpreter who was not richly endowed with that noble but most rare Faculty which can re-create the past and place us in the heart of a by-gone world, that Historic Imagination which throws itself into the sympathies of Antiquity and re-produces the living forms of Society that kindled the very thoughts and modified the very language now submitted to our minds; and in addition to all this I should demand, also, as an essential requisite for an Interpreter, a mind emptied of all prejudice, a calm and sound judgment.

Now it is most evident that a result depending on so many qualifications will be necessarily uncertain; that in every separate man who comes to the study of the New Testament, according as these instruments of interpretation exist in different degrees of perfection will they derive various meanings from the written document; and that consequently, since nowhere do these requisites for a perfect interpretation exist in perfection, there is no one of the contested meanings that can be relied upon with an absolute confidence. It is also to be noticed, that this uncertainty attending the meaning of words does not attach to the *narrative* or *historical* portion of a document, but is very much confined to that portion of it which contains doctrinal ideas, philosophical theories, or metaphysical statements. The descriptive portion of an ancient writing, (and especially when, as in the case of Christ, the description is of a moral nature, and is addressed to the affections and the

soul, which are the same in all ages,) will convey a uniform and universal impression, whilst the didactic portion of the very same writing will suggest as many meanings as there are varieties of intellectual texture and complexion in the minds that read it. The character of Jesus shines out from the Gospels to be seen of all men, full of grace and truth. No one mistakes that. It does not depend upon the skilful application of the science of Interpretation. The symbols of language that reveal the living Jesus are of universal significance, and finding their way at once to every heart, stamp upon it a faithful image of the Christ. But doctrinal conceptions cannot be conveyed in this way: there is no universal and unchanging language for metaphysical ideas—and consequently it is impossible that any written communication on such subjects should be free from a variety of interpretations. And especially must this be so, when, as is the case with the Trinity, the doctrine is nowhere expressly stated in the document, but is only inferred by connecting together into a system a number of ideas which it seems to contain. Let me give you an illustration that was lately brought before me of the impossibility of a Revelation of doctrines being made to man, by means of written language, upon such subjects as the Trinity, the modes in which the essence of the Deity enables him personally to subsist. I heard it stated on a late occasion by Dr.Tattershall, that the Trinity existed as one nature in three personalities; and that to ask how three could be one and one three, was to ask an unmeaning and irrelevant question, because that the Trinity was three and one in different senses, three in Person but one in Essence. I turn now to Dr. Sherlock, and I find these words: "To say," says Dr. William Sherlock, "that there are three divine persons, and not three distinct infinite minds, is both heresy and nonsense." "The distinction of persons cannot be more truly and aptly represented than by the distinction between three men; for Father, Son, and Holy

Ghost, are as really distinct persons as Peter, James, and John." Here then we have Dr. Tattershall charging Sherlock with polytheism; and we have Sherlock charging Dr. Tattershall with Heresy and nonsense. That is, neither of these Trinitarians regards the other as having the true faith. Is it not evident then, that the doctrine of the Trinity, seeing how Trinitarians themselves charge one another with heresy, cannot be a doctrine of *Revelation*, cannot be a part of that universal Gospel which was preached to the poor, and revealed unto babes?

It was stated in Christ Church, by the Rev. Mr. Byrth, that the controversy between us was solely a question of Interpretation. It is so, because, in the case cited, our dispute is about doctrines. The question of *Unitarianism* or *Trinitarianism* must be decided by Interpretation after Criticism has fixed the Text to be interpreted; but I deny, altogether, that the question of *Christianity* or *No-Christianity* is to be decided by any such imperfect and doubtful instrument. Though no one honours Scholarship more, or has a profounder veneration for its noble functions, and altogether renouncing the vulgarity of depreciating its high offices, and maintaining, wherever I have influence, especially for our own Church and in our own day, the necessity for a learned Ministry, able to refresh their souls at the original wells and unfrighted by confident dogmatism to give a reason for the faith that is in them, I yet declare, that Christianity is a Religion for the people; that the Gospel was originally preached to the poor; that Christ is manifested to the heart and soul of every man whom he attracts by heavenly sympathy; that when not many wise, not many learned were called, the lowly but honest in heart, recognized the divine brightness, and sat at the feet of Jesus docile and rejoicing; and I protest altogether against any learned Aristocracy, any literary Hierarchy, any priestly Mediators, having more of

the true light that lighteth every man than the humblest of their brethren, who has taken to his heart the free gift of God, and loves the Lord Jesus with sincerity.

Now, strange to say, this principle was broadly admitted. It was broadly admitted that Christianity is not the property of scholars or critics, but the gift of God to all men; and yet, with a remarkable inconsistency, it was added, that "the all men" to whom Christianity is the gift of God, must find in it the doctrine of the Trinity, else they are no Christians at all. That is, Christianity is the gift of God to those who, by the aids of interpretation and criticism, become Trinitarians, and to all those who, following their leaders, accept this doctrine; but is not the gift of God to Unitarians, who, though loving Jesus as their Light on Earth and their Forerunner amid the skies, cannot so read either the written Gospel or the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, as to collect from them the doctrine of a Trinity. If Trinitarianism is Christianity exclusively, then Christianity *is not* the gift of God to all men; for many, in all ages of the Church, and in the first century, perhaps, without exception, have accepted Christ, but knew no Trinity. If Trinitarianism is Christianity exclusively, then Christianity *is* the property of critics and scholars, for that doctrine is not a self-evidencing Truth, it does not shine out from the Gospels so that no honest mind and pure heart can fail to receive it, and, if capable of being proved at all, it can only be proved by a most technical and subtle logic, by far-fetched inferences from disconnected texts, every one of which is open to a hostile criticism, and by a most scholastic and indirect system of interpretation, which is a task, and that a most painful one, for plain men to comprehend. My audience will be enabled to judge of this matter for themselves when I tell them that one of the strongest reliances of modern Trinitarians, until proved to be completely fallacious,

was the power of the Greek article; and that one of the texts long used in this controversy, and still used,* owes its whole importance to an accident so minute as this, whether the letter O was printed with a central dot, or without the dot; so that the chance touch of a transcriber might put in or put out one of the principle proofs of the doctrine of the Trinity. Now I further declare, that all the strongest evidence for the doctrine of the Trinity is exactly of the same critical nature —that the only text of the slightest difficulty, cited in Christ Church on Wednesday evening, owes its whole force to a question of punctuation; and that the best critics and scholars, and they Trinitarians, for true scholars never degrade their high calling, nor enter the solemn sanctuary open to them alone, to falsify the oracle, give many authorities against the Trinitarian, and in favour of the Unitarian, Interpretation.† Now will any man tell me that the doctrine of the Trinity, which, if true, is the most awful Truth that ever bowed down the heart, that the God of Heaven walked this earth, a partaker of our sufferings and our sorrows, and lived our life, and died our death, would be left to be proved by evidence of this nature, by a controversy nearly two thousand years after the Revelation, about the force of the Greek article and the punctuation of a Greek manuscript? Is this the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world? There could have been no difficulty in revealing this doctrine, in words at least, if it was intended to be revealed. The Athanasian Creed is at least explicit enough, and leaves us in no doubt

* Scholz retains *θεος*.

† See Griesbach. Chrysostom omits "*who is God over all.*" Clement, in a passage evidently imitated from this, omits the doxology, which he is not likely to have done if he understood it as referring to Christ. In addition to other authorities for pointing the passage in consistency with the Unitarian Interpretation, Griesbach quotes "Many Fathers who denied that Christ could be called 'the God over all.' Multi patres, qui Christum *τὸν ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸν* appellari posse negant." In an edition of Griesbach, printed by Taylor and Walton in 1837, this punctuation is given, and is stated also to be the pointing of Scholz.

of the purpose of its Author. Now I conclude that if Trinitarianism alone is Christianity, and if such are the processes of criticism and interpretation by which alone that doctrine can be proved, then Trinitarianism *is the property of Critics and Scholars, and those who implicitly trust them;* and Christianity requiring us either to be Critics or to prostrate ourselves before Critics, not agreed among themselves, is *not* the free "gift of God to all men." The rightful privileges of critics and scholars are large enough, and let no man disown them; but I do disown this literary Hierarchy arrogating to themselves sole access to the oracles of God, and limiting Christ's free approach to the souls of the people to long processes of inferential reasoning and the winding ways of a syllogism. I entreat them to stand aside, and let the living Jesus come into communication with the living heart, and not place themselves, like the multitude who threatened the blind beside the way, between the ready mercy of the Heavenly Teacher and the humblest follower who seeks his face, that a ray of the light that shineth there may fall upon eager and wistful, though dimmed and earth-stained, eyes. "And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way-side begging. And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. And he cried, saying, Jesus thou son of David, have mercy on me. And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near he asked him, saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee."

I trust that you will perceive now the essential distinction between a Revelation by words, of doctrines, and a Revelation by a living being; between the uncertain meaning that

is arrived at by the interpretation of language, and the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shining on the face of Jesus Christ. In the one case we have a statement of doubtful doctrines in written words; in the other we have a living Character. In the one case we have the dead letter; in the other we have the "word made flesh." In the one case we have the Mind of God stated in propositions; in the other we have the Image of God set up in our hearts, and the purposes of God for man, both while on earth and beyond the grave, realized before us, to be seen of all men. If Christianity is a scheme of doctrines in a written communication from God, then of course it is subject to all the necessary ambiguities of language; and expositors will be busy upon it, to draw out of it all the meanings it can possibly contain; and every fresh interpretation will be regarded by some as part of the Revelation from Heaven, and never will men rest lest there should be some lurking sense in it that they have not reached, and every interpreter will thrust in the face of the world, *as the essential and saving meaning*, his own reading of the document. And as language is a thing that is never fixed, but is always gathering fresh imports from the developements of Time, this is a process that must go on for ever, and the document will speak a new Message to the men of every age, and the Doctrines that constitute Salvation will be always the subject matter of a controversy. But if Christianity, instead of a form of written words, is a character sent to us by God, to manifest his will in the flesh, and to reveal living Truth in a living Being; if Jesus himself is the record we are to study; if it is not an inspired Book but an inspired Life that is the gift of God; if his works of Power and Love, his actions and his sufferings, his holy living and dying, are the full and spiritual Scriptures imprinted on humanity by God's own hand, then the whole work of a Christian is to understand and love that Character,—then is the Revelation like a light shining in a dark place, "a salvation pre-

pared before the face of all people," "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of his people Israel," a ray of God's light shining into the heart of man, touching the mountain tops of humanity and piercing the deep valleys, that all flesh may see it together.

It is in remarkable consistency with these views that very little is said in the popular systems of Christ's character. The doctrinal ideas respecting Jesus are all in all: the moral and spiritual ideas are looked upon as not peculiarly Christian. A vast deal is said about his Rank, his Merits, his Mediatorial Distinction: very little is said about his Life, his Example, his Revelations of Duty and of Destiny. The Trinitarians taunt us with having no use for Christ in our system. Certainly we believe in a God who does not require their Christ. We do not speak of Atonement therefore. But we might retort, that if we neglect their metaphysical Christ, they neglect our moral and spiritual Christ. They speak little of his character, his life, his example, as a model for humanity: nor could they in consistency with their system. Jesus, as God and man, is powerless as an exhibition of what man may be. He is no revelation of Humanity to Humanity. Humanity with Deity attached to it, or indwelling, is Humanity no more.

If Christianity is a system of doctrines to be deduced from words, and if our salvation depends upon the certainty of our deductions, then is it not clear that God would be requiring an absolute Truth of Interpretation which he has not given us the means of attaining, and that the Revelation, even to "Critics and Scholars," would be an *uncertain property?* But if Christianity is an inspired Life, the Duties and the Destinies of Man shown forth on the Son of God, the word made flesh, the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ, a character perfectly reflecting the purposes of Providence, and preserved for us, in faithful narratives that still enable us to have the image of Jesus formed within us, then

is it not clear that the Revelation is perpetuated in our hearts, and that the Christ with us still, the same yesterday and to-day, and for ever, is the gift of God to all men. "Lo, I am with you always, to the end of the world." Now this is Christ's own account of himself as a Revelation. "I am the light of the world." "I am the Resurrection and the Life." "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him and have seen him."* "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."† "Whoso hath seen me hath seen the Father also." And to crown all this scriptural evidence, this is God's own account of his Christ as a Revelation, authenticating him at the opening of his Mission, and repeated again as His seal upon its close, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

I have shown that there is no doctrinal certainty in Christianity considered as a *written* Revelation: but neither is there *any moral certainty* as to the Will of God and his practical requirements conveyed by mere words. When God tells me in words to love Him and to love my neighbour, I do not know what practical forms these feelings are to assume, neither do I know how all the influences of my present life are to control me in the exercise of these affections. But I understand what God means when I see Jesus interpreting for me this will of God by his own character, and combining in his own life, through all circumstances, the perfect love of God and Man. Now I maintain, that no system of Doctrine could be a Revelation to me of the purposes and ends of life. It is a practical question, and practically must it be solved. He who will work out for me on this scene of things the great designs of my being, and show to me, in

* John xiv. 6, 7. † John v. 19.

action and in suffering, in sympathy and in struggle, in the throbbings of life and in the hushed sublimities of death, the right attitudes of my nature, the fitting dignities of enlightened and heaven-bound man,—he who is not the Prophet merely of divine Truth but the Impersonator of his own views, who stands successively in each practical position and robes himself in the living glories of duty,—he alone can pretend to be a Revelation of character, as God wills it, having stamped upon his views illustrations of Reality. And he alone can pretend to have unravelled the mystery of our Discipline, who himself passes through our trials, and transmutes them into the nurseries of Power, the pregnant schools of Character—who shows us the outward circumstance, as a torch to the Spirit, lighting up the energies of Duty's inviolable will,—who moves amid the evil that is in the world, and is not overcome by it, but overcomes it with good,—who encounters sin and sinners, and treats them with the pity of a brother, yet with the holiness of one whose Father is the spiritual God,—who stands amid baffled purposes of good, the broken projects of benevolence in the unquelled trusts of Faith, seeing, though afar off, the Harvest of this unpromising Spring,—in whom the worst aspects of Humanity only draw out the unselfishness of Charity; and the clouded countenance of God, veiled to sight though not to Faith, the perfect peace of a filial Spirit. He who passes for us through all this variety of mortal circumstance, and exhibits each, even the most dark and unpromising, as full of the materials of our Education, contributing to the formation of that perfect mind which is the end and heaven of our being, is indeed a perfect Revelation, "unimproved and unimprovable," though improving *us* to the end of Time, an embodied Scripture, the word made flesh and dwelling amongst us.

Christianity will be a matter of controversy so long as men look to it for what they are *to think*, and not for what they are *to trust in and be*. Creeds will divide the world, so long

as Christianity is regarded as a Revelation of Doctrines, and not as a Revelation of Character, of Practical Interests, of Destinies and of Duties. In the one case it will be the "property of Critics and Scholars," held by an uncertain tenure; in the other case, it will be "the gift of God to all men." Strange that all Protestants do not feel the force of this argument! And as for Roman Catholics, if we had any controversy with them, the argument has only to take another step to hold them too in its grasp.

And now I shall be obliged to speak of Critics and Scholars in a way that Critics and Scholars should never expose themselves to be spoken of. I have a most painful duty before me, very different from the one I had been led to expect,—which I had hoped would have been to answer calm, learned, judicious reasonings, instead of simply to resist pretension, a task, which if much easier, is yet one that neither elevates nor instructs. Nothing could justify me in using in this place the language of grave remonstrance, but the consciousness that thereby instead of indulging I am wounding my own feelings, and the conviction that, in this case, Duty to Truth and to the Public requires it from me. Every one must have felt that the declaration before the world, of "the Unitarian Interpretation of the New Testament, based upon defective Scholarship, or on dishonest or uncandid criticism," ought to have been amply supported, or never made. To fail in the proof was to pass not only intellectual but the severest *moral* condemnation on such a statement. I know of no abuse of Power and Place more immoral, than when a Scholar uses his Scholarship to libel others before the unlearned, than when a Preacher uses his sacred and elevated standing to make assertions that are taken upon his word, but which are not correct, and of which nothing but the *certainty* that they were correct could justify the utterance. If I cannot take example from what I witnessed in Christ Church on Wednesday evening, let me at least take

warning. I will not pray to be preserved meek and truthful, and then regard my prayer as an indemnity for unlicensed speech. I will not commit here the disrespectful impropriety of quoting Greek. Neither will I pay this audience the false compliment of pretending to make such subjects intelligible and interesting to them, but I will make some statements that shall go forth to the world, and there find fitting judgment. There are some points, however, to which I shall have to advert, of which every one may judge.

1. It was stated by the Preacher that he could not himself believe the mysterious statements of the New Testament unless he first believed in their inspiration, and that this alone could command his faith. Now there was great candour in this, but no Scholarship. You cannot prove the Inspiration of the Bible except by first proving the truth of the Bible, for there are no proofs of Inspiration except what the Bible itself contains. To believe in the truth of the Bible, because it is inspired, and then to prove it inspired because it is true, is an error in reasoning inexcusable in the divines of the Church of England, for an eminent Bishop of their own Church, Bishop Marsh, has abundantly exposed it.

2. It was stated that every Unitarian Minister in England was as much bound by the Improved Version, as every Clergyman of the Establishment was by the Articles of the Church. The Preacher has written his name beneath those Articles; as long as he remains in the Church he has, to use Milton's expression, to those Articles subscribed "Slave;" he has entered into a vow to preach nothing contrary to them; he belongs to a body of men organized to prevent all dissent from those Articles, and pledged to oppose and avenge every attempt to break up the dogmatical principle of their Church Union, and yet he stated solemnly before an assembled multitude that no Clergyman of the Church was more bound by the Articles of the Church than was every Unitarian Minister by a Book which one man edited on his sole literary respon-

sibility, and which other men contributed to publish, simply because they expected from it some valuable scriptural aid. Now when a man is capable of making such a statement, when his judgment will allow him to do so, his credibility as a witness to facts I do not dispute, but *his opinion* on any question, merely as coming from him, I cannot feel deserving of my confidence. I might quote passages of cotemporary Unitarian criticism reflecting on the Improved Version; I might quote Dr. Carpenter in his answer to Archbishop Magee, ascribing the whole responsibility to Mr. Belsham; I might quote Mr. Yates in his able answer to Mr. Wardlaw, exposing the false impression made by Dr. Magee, that the Improved Version was the Unitarian Version: but I cannot so misuse your time. The Unitarians, most of whom never saw the work, and whose pride it is that their Ministers study the Scriptures freely, and lay before them the results, will smile at the idea of these Ministers being as much bound by the Improved Version as the Clergy by the Articles of the Church, though in a graver spirit they must morally condemn an assertion so recklessly made. It was stated that all Protestant Christians were satisfied with the received Version up to the time of the Improved Version, and, to advance no other proof of the ignorance displayed by such a statement, in the next breath it was declared that the Improved Version was on the basis of Archbishop Newcome's Translation, the title of which is this, "An Attempt towards revising our English Translation of the Greek Scriptures." But what means this attempt to fasten us down to the Improved Version? Is it not clear that these clergymen wish us to fight the battle upon a disadvantageous ground? Is it not clear that they wish us to take up some weak position, and defend that, rather than meet us in the strongest positions that criticism and scholarship enable us to assume and to maintain? Is not our controversy between Unitarianism and Trinitarianism, and what can be more unworthy of critics and

scholars than to conduct that controversy on any ground but that of the original Scriptures? We do not think of fixing *them* down to any particular critic of their own church, many of whom we could advance who abandon almost every position they maintain; we freely give them advantage of the best criticism and the best scholarship they can anywhere obtain; and we do confess that we hold it very uncandid towards us, and very unconfiding in their own strength, and very disloyal towards Truth, to tell opponents, I wish I could say fellow inquirers, that they are not to defend their cause by the best arguments known to them, but by a certain set of arguments published in a certain book more than thirty years ago, and before some of *us* now engaged in this controversy were born. Our controversy is not about the Improved Version, but about the Greek Testament; and I must certainly regard any attempt to intercept us in our appeal to the original Scripture, by thrusting any other Version in our faces, as a sign either of great weakness or of great unfairness. Where would the Lecturers at Christ Church have got matter of indictment against us, if it had not been for this Improved Version?

3. It was stated that minute examination of the Scripture Evidence for Trinitarianism hardly influenced the result, for so thoroughly were the Scriptures imbued with its doctrines, that if but a fragment of them remained, the mysterious truths that pervade the whole would be found in that fragment. Now I doubt not that men can say these things sincerely, and yet methinks they ought to ask themselves before they mislead a multitude, is there Reality in these statements? Now I can not only mention fragments, but whole books, in which Trinitarians themselves will confess that there is not a trace of these doctrines; the whole Gospel of St. Mark; the whole Gospel of St. Luke, for the portions respecting the miraculous generation cannot be proof of the Deity of the person so generated; the whole of the book of Acts; and

very many of the Epistles. We have the Gospel which the apostle Peter delivered to the Gentiles, when he gave them his exposition of Christianity, and we find from it that Cornelius and the Gentiles might have believed *all* that the Apostle taught them, and yet, according to the Trinitarians, be lost everlastingly from the scantiness of their faith. Here then is the Gospel which Peter delivered to the Gentiles, containing the whole account he gave them of the doctrine of Christ: "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judæa, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem: whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly: not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."* Now you will know what weight, what measure of calm and considerate truth attach to the assertions made at Christ Church, when you compare this account of Christianity by the Apostle Peter, with the bold statement that if only a fragment of the New Testa-

* Acts x. 34—43.

ment remained, it would contain and show forth the mysterious doctrines of Trinitarianism.

4. It was stated that a slight degree of evidence might affect the introductory chapters of Matthew and Luke, if the statements they contain were not supported by the rest of the Gospels, but that so full were the Gospels of the peculiarities of these chapters, to remove them would be like removing the Portico from a Temple. The only evidence brought to support this large declaration was the last verse of the Gospel of St. Matthew, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Now I am not concerned in the correctness or the incorrectness of the Improved Version's translation of this passage, Lo I am with you alway, to the end of the age, or dispensation, that is, till the new dispensation was fully established: for in the first place I have no difficulty in believing that the spirit and power of Jesus was with his followers when in the strength of love and trust they lived and died for him and for his truth, and that thus spiritually he still is with all who give him a place in their hearts, even unto the end of the world; and, in the second place, translate this passage in any way you will, and it contains no assertion of the Deity of Jesus, and no confirmation of the miraculous conception. But when I hear it confidently asserted in the presence of a crowd ready to take the Preacher's word for anything he chooses to assert about Greek, that *any* scholarship is utterly contemptible that interprets the "end of the world" to mean "the end of the era or age," or that puts any other interpretation on these words than that of the received version, I confess I am amazed at the boldness with which men not habitually under correction will make rash statements, even at times when they must know that watchful eyes are upon them. I turn to Schleusner's Lexicon of the New Testament, I look for the word in question, and I find from that authority that the word signifies primarily, an undefined period of considerable

extent, and, secondarily, the state of things existing within that period; I find him quoting the very passage in question which we are told *every scholar* would translate "to the end of the *world*," and explaining it to mean "to the end of the lives" of the Apostles; I find that in other cases where this word is used, a limit is put upon its meaning, restricting it to the signification of "age or dispensation," and rendering it impossible it should mean the "end of the world," in our sense, by such a clause as this, "Verily I say unto you, *this generation* shall not pass until all these things be fulfilled;"* I find in our common version the plural† of this word translated exactly as the singular, where if "dispensations" was substituted for "world,"‡ all difficulty would disappear; I find the interpretation of the Improved Version given by such scholars as Hammond and Le Clerc, and adopted consistently and throughout by Bishop Pearce, who argues for it against the common rendering, and whether it is true or not, which is really a matter of no importance, I do calmly but solemnly protest against any man so abusing his actual place and his reputation for learning, as to proclaim to a multitude that no scholar would countenance such a translation, and that no interpreter would adopt it, except for the sake of an *à priori* meaning. No man who understood the dignity and the privileges of scholars would in this way forfeit them. §

5. It was stated that *no scholar* would translate the first verse of the Gospel of St. John thus: "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God."‖

* Matt. xxiv. 3, 34.

† "The mistranslation of the word αἰῶνες, by the English word 'worlds,' in the commencement of the Epistle to the Hebrews. For giving this sense to the original term, there is not, I think, any authority to be found either in Hellenistic or classic Greek."—*Norton on the Trinity.*

‡ Heb. ix. 26.

§ Whitby, from whose armoury I find so many weapons have been taken, contends also for "the end of the world," on the ground that Christ's miraculous assistance was continued sensibly *till the beginning of the fourth century.*

‖ John x. 34, 35, 36.

Now for myself I do not agree with this translation. I think that the Logos, or Word, is a very usual personification of the Power and Wisdom of God. (See Prov. viii.) I think that this verse has no reference to Jesus whatsoever; that in the first place God alone is spoken of; his Power and Wisdom are described as belonging to and dwelling with him; that He is described as purposing to communicate or reveal these to men, for of course it is not God himself, but only a portion of his Knowledge and Will that can be revealed to us; and then for the first time in the fourteenth verse is Jesus introduced, as the person through whose character these attributes are to be communicated, "the Word was made *flesh* and dwelt amongst us." I dissent therefore from the translation which Mr. Byrth condemned; but when I am told that NO SCHOLAR would tolerate such a translation, I turn to my books, and I find Origen and Eusebius not only tolerating but actually adopting and insisting upon this very translation. I recollect that Greek was *the vernacular tongue* of these eminent men; and when I am told by an Englishman, in this nineteenth century, that no Greek Scholar would do what Origen and Eusebius *have done*, I think it is not disrespectful to decline his authority in all matters that require calmness and accuracy.

6. It was stated that *no scholar* could translate the fifth verse of the ninth chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans thus: "Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came: God who is over all be blessed for ever." Perhaps the more correct rendering would be, "whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came (*i. e.* from among whom the Messiah was to be born); he who was over all, was God blessed for ever:" or with more fidelity because with more rapidity, our language not admitting, like the Greek, the ellipsis of the substantive verb—"He who was over all, being God blessed for ever." With regard to the ellipsis of the substantive verb, nothing

can be more common. It occurs again and again in the verses that lie on each side of the text in question. And in ascriptions of praise it is almost uniform. And nothing can be more natural than that the Apostle should state as the closing distinction of the Jews, that over all their dispensations it was God who presided, the God of their signal Theocracy. Now when I am told that no scholar would so translate, let me simply name to you some of the Scholars who *do* adopt this translation: Erasmus, Bucer, Le Clerc, Grotius, and Wetstein; the first three most learned Trinitarians, and the last two, if not of unquestioned orthodoxy, only of suspected Heresy. Let me now give you some quotations from other Scholars of an earlier date, from the Christian Fathers, even when adopting the received translation of this passage. Tertullian, whose temper rather than his learning has been preserved in controversy, says, "We never speak of two Gods or two Lords; but following the Apostle, if the Father and the Son are to be named together, we call the Father, God, and Jesus Christ, Lord." "But when speaking of Christ alone, I may call him God, as does the same Apostle; *of whom is Christ, who is God over all blessed for ever.* For speaking of a ray of the sun by itself," continues Tertullian, "I may call it the sun; but when I mention at the same time the sun, from which this ray proceeds, I do not then give that name to the latter." "Some of the earlier GREEK FATHERS," who I suppose it will be admitted knew Greek, "expressly denied that Christ is 'the God over all.'" "Supposing," says Origen, "that some among the multitude of believers, *likely as they are to have differences of opinion*, rashly suppose that the Saviour is God over all; *yet we do not*, for we believe him when he said, 'The Father who sent me is greater than I.'" Even after the Nicene Council, Eusebius, in writing against Marcellus, says: "As Marcellus thinks, He who was born of the holy virgin, and clothed in flesh, who dwelt among men, and

suffered what had been foretold, and died for our sins, was the very God over all; for daring to say which, the Church of God numbered Sabellius among Atheists and Blasphemers." *

I have one other observation to make upon this verse. The translation of the passage depends very much on a question of punctuation, and, so far, is a question for Critics and Scholars. Now we have seen already the high authorities that give the punctuation in favour of the Unitarian rendering.† I say nothing of the conjectural readings of these two passages, because, though brought by the Preacher as instances of unlicensed Conjecture, he treated them chiefly as mistranslations, with the view I suppose of introducing the same passages over and over again, to multiply the instances of Unitarian alterations. The conjecture is not adopted by the improved version; and yet, for allowing some little weight to the authority of Dr. Whitby in the latter case, for it allows none whatever to the conjecture of Crellius in the former, it is charged with two sins: first, the sin of adopting the conjecture; and secondly, the sin of mistranslation after *rejecting* the conjecture. This is a method of multiplying sins, or rather charges. Indeed, if I understood the Preacher, he admitted that Crellius and Slichtingius, in the then state of Biblical knowledge, might very justifiably have made the conjectures, *for they were Scholars:* but that now, with all our new lights, such a conjecture is inadmissible; that is to say, Biblical Literature was not far enough advanced in their day to enable them to discover in these texts, what yet if they did not discover there, or somewhere else, they must perish everlastingly. And yet we were

* Wetstein, quoted by Norton.

† See note, page 19. I have no access to the text of Scholz, except in the edition published by Taylor and Walton. This places a period after *σάρκα, flesh*; which, however, it also gives in the text as the pointing of Griesbach, contrary to the only other edition I have at present the opportunity of examining.

told that Christianity was not the property of critics and scholars, but the gift of God to all men.*

Now when I examine into these things, my duty to scholarship, my reverence for its high functions, my duty to Truth, my duty to the public, who ought not, in matters not of opinion but of knowledge, to be misled by their Teachers, and my duty to the Pulpit, which suffers in power and credit by every unwarrantable statement that proceeds from it, all oblige me to declare that the impression which I carried away from Christ Church, that the supposed ignorance of a vast assembly was sported with, and their confidence abused, has been more than confirmed.

So much for scholarship and candour together. I have now to speak of "candour" alone.

1. A sentiment was quoted from Coleridge, expressing his belief, that if Jesus was not God, *he was a deceiver:* and then the Preacher asked his audience, "Can the advocates of a system that makes Jesus a deceiver be Christians?" thus identifying Unitarians with the sentiment of Coleridge. How long will controversialists condescend to such practices? From any controversy so conducted no good can come: but great scandal to Religionists, and deep pain to all who love Religion and Truth better than their own party.

2. Advantage was taken of some words of my Colleague, the Minister of this Chapel, to produce the impression that Unitarianism, as a religious faith, was merely negative. Now the words themselves not only bear no such meaning, but guard against it; and the whole speech from which they were extracted is rich in the overflowings of the true, working, onward spirit of our faith, as you who have the privilege of worshipping here, well know everything from the same mind must necessarily be. The words quoted were these: "I conceive that, *controversially*, our system is correctly descri-

* See Appendix for a fuller examination of these two passages, *viz.*, the Proem of St. John's Gospel, and Rom. ix. 5.

bed as purely negative," and the whole object of the speech was to enforce the peaceful and fruitful view that the power of our religion proceeds not from what we disbelieve, but from what we believe. No man who read the speech could be ignorant of this; and it is remarkable, that the very next words, containing a passage quoted by Mr. Byrth, are these: "Let us place the utmost reliance upon positive religious principles; and especially let us act on our own internal convictions." My valued friend is abundantly equal to the task of defending himself, and not often should I do him the disservice of appearing for him, but as this statement was made in a lecture which it was my duty to answer, and as I am always confirmed in any view of my own that I can identify with him, I shall, to show that the present is no forced advocacy,* extract a few sentences from an Article, which nearly at the time he was speaking, it happened to be my duty to be writing. "We are not devotional, we are not practical, in our *combative* aspects. We are on preliminary, not on Christian ground. We are not improving, we have not a Religion, until we have ceased contending and commenced cultivating. Moral progress proceeds from cultivation of the faith we rest in, producing its fruits in the warmth of love. We must pursue what is our own, and forget our controversial attitudes. They never will nourish the inner life of a Congregation, nor keep its interest alive. They give us no character of our own. They feed no intense yearnings. They make no devoted disciples. We must *proceed* upon our own views, not defending them, but loving them and studying them. We must pursue a more independent course of DEVELOPEMENT. We must understand our own mission, which is not to battle but to advance; not to be dogmatists of any kind, but cherishers of Spirit and of Truth. Our Union must be a moral one, a sympathy of Spirit. We can

* And especially since Mr. Byrth has alluded to the disapprobation with which the sentiment was received.

have no intellectual or doctrinal union. We must give up therefore the idea of aggregate life, as a Body devoted to a uniform Belief, and held together by the forms of an uniform Ecclesiastical Government. The whole body can flourish only by the members having each life in himself. Our union must be one of sentiment and first principles; our life one of individualities." And again, speaking of Unitarian Ministers: "They should present a Christianity qualified by its energy to meet both the strength and the weakness of the spiritual being, to inspire a devoted love, and to lead souls captive. They should take their stand upon no combative ground. They should eschew a religion of negations. FAITH should be their great power; a faith that appeals to the faith of their hearers, nourishing it where it is, creating it where it is not. With no other bond of union than this power to satisfy the deep spiritual wants of those to whom they minister, they above all others should cultivate a Christianity that has positive attractions for the spirit of man, a Christianity that is fitted to draw upon itself the warmest and purest affections; a Christianity that engages to do for us what it did for Christ, to elevate the diviner tendencies, whilst it supports the weakness of our frail yet noble nature. From the absence of creeds, and its want of a mystical or fanatical interest, no sect, so much as Unitarianism, requires a sympathetic, generous, deep-hearted faith, an affirmative and nutritive Christianity, to lay hold upon the religious affections, and feed the religious life of its Churches. There is no other sect to which coldness in Religion could be so fatal."*

I have now gone through all the evidence adduced on Wednesday evening, in support of the allegation, "The Unitarian interpretation of the New Testament based upon defective Scholarship, or on dishonest or uncandid Criticism." Such a declaration, again I say, should never have been made, or should have been adequately sustained. To fail in the

* Christian Teacher, New Series, No. I, pp. 31, 32.

proof is to pass upon the statement not intellectual only, but moral condemnation. We were told by the preacher that when the time came to support the allegation, he would not use irritating language, but sound argument. I grieve to say that pledge was not redeemed. And the moral condemnation of advancing such a charge, and leaving it unproved, falls upon him. I understand that the lecture was continued yesterday evening; when the press puts it into my hands I shall have an opportunity of seeing what additional comments it may require. But when I was told by the preacher himself, on Wednesday evening, that on the evidence then adduced, and which I have now presented to you, he regarded his charge made out not only in one but in both its clauses, that in short he had been too forbearing, for that instead of the disjunctive he might have used the copulative conjunction, and made his accusation to be this, "The Unitarian Interpretation of the New Testament based upon defective scholarship, *and* on dishonest *and* uncandid Criticism,"—I held myself discharged from all further duty of attention.

And now, after the "expostulations" to which you have been subjected elsewhere, your convictions treated as sins, and the exercise of your conscientious judgment represented as exposing you to the wrath of a holy God, (strange combination of ideas, wrath and holiness!) I may, perhaps, not unbecomingly address a few words to you my fellow believers. Trinitarians have the power to deny you the *name* of Christians; but they have not the power to deny you the Reality. They cannot prevent you *being* Christians; and it is a light thing for you to be judged by man's judgment, provided only you can disprove the judgment by preserving your Christianity unprovoked, by retaining your Christian love towards those who deny you the Christian name. The worst operation of persecution and fanaticism is its tendency to produce a reaction. The worst working of an Evil Spirit is that it calls other evil spirits to oppose it. The temper we complain

of has a tendency to provoke the same temper in ourselves. And yet an evil spirit cannot be conquered by an evil spirit. This is one of the divine prerogatives of the spirit of goodness. You must overcome evil with good. You must be prepared to expect that men who deem themselves your religious superiors, will comport themselves accordingly. You must regard it as only natural that men who hold themselves to be the favourites of God, and never expect to meet you in heaven, should treat you with little respect on earth. Nay, you must even have some tenderness for the feelings of irritation which this very faith cannot fail to generate in the kindlier nature of those who hold it. Holding you to be lost, and having human hearts, how can they avoid of assailing you with eager, anxious, and even persecuting aggression? I blame them not for this: I only wonder there is so little of it: that they leave us to our fate, with so little effort, to use their own favourite figure, to pluck the brands from the burning. Nay, my friends, more than this, their confidence in their own salvation depending on the dogmatical assurance with which they hold certain doctrinal ideas, they are naturally alarmed lest this *essential faith* should in any way be disturbed in their bosoms, and they come to look upon every freer mind as a tempter and an enemy. And as their Faith is by their own boast not a *rational* Faith, as it has no roots in their intellectual nature, they feel that their danger is all the greater, and that their caution must be all the more. They are not happy in their exclusive faith. How can they if they have Christian hearts? It rests upon an evidence out of themselves, so that they cannot, at all times, be confident in it. It presents to them many unhappy images, a vindictive God,* an exclusive Heaven, a condemned world, fellow beings against whom their religious feelings are embittered, but

* By this I mean a God who cannot forgive except by one process—advantage of which must be taken by an act of faith—it being always uncertain whether the faith is right or sufficient.

towards whom their hearts still yearn. All these are reasons why you should exercise forbearance. You have an easier part. You have a faith that supports you in meek Hope and Trust for all. Your hearts are at peace both with Man and God. You can wait in patience until Heaven does justice unto all. Having this more blessed and peaceful faith, you must also make it more fruitful, and thus be enabled to meet the question, "What do ye more than others?"

For ourselves, let us pursue our own way, and love our own Christ in meek faith and trust. Doctrines are uncertain: but the spirit of Jesus is not uncertain. You know what that is; and that its fruits are, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Love, venerate, obey in all things, the Heaven-sent and Heaven-marked Christ; cherish the growth of his spirit in your souls; place him before you in moments of trying duty; and in all times of nature's languishing see him at the open gate of Heaven, inviting you to be faithful to the end, that you may join him at the resurrection of the just. Do this and your souls shall live. To be this is to be Christians. Others may hold a different language: but you owe no allegiance save to God in Christ. One is your master, and all ye are brethren.

APPENDIX.

See pp. 30, 31.

συντελειαν του αιωνος—the end of *the age.*

" Hanc ob causam Judæi universum tempus in duas magnas periodos dispescere consueverunt, alteram Messiæ adventum antecedentem (αιων ουτος vel ὁ νυν αιων), alteram consequentem (αιων μελλων vel ερχομενος vel εκεινος). Postremam illius (αιωνος τουτου) partem, ævo Messiano annexam, nominarunt ὑστερους καιρους, καιρον εσχατον, εσχατα των χρονων, εσχαταs ἡμεραs, *exitumque ejus* τα τελη των αιωνων vel συντελειαν του αιωνος."—*Bertholdt. Christologia Judæorum Jesu Apostolorumque ætate.* pp. 38, 39.

" On this account the Jews were accustomed to divide TIME into two great Periods, one preceding the advent of the Messiah, and called ' this world,' ' this age,' or, ' the world that now is,' ' the age that now is;' the other subsequent to the advent, and called ' the world to come,' ' the age to come,' ' that world,' ' that age.' The latter portion of the former Period, that immediately adjoining the Messianic Age, they called ' the latter times,' ' the last time,' ' these last days,'—and its close, (*that is, the close of the Ante-Messianic Period*), ' the ends of the world,' or, ' the end of the world,' ' the end of the age.' "

The Introduction of St. John's Gospel.

See pp. 31, 32.

" In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God."

" There is no word in English answering to the Greek word Logos, as here used. It was employed to denote a mode of conception concerning the Deity, familiar at the time when St. John wrote, and intimately blended with the philosophy of his age, but long since obsolete, and so foreign from our habits of thinking, that it is not easy for us to conform our minds to its apprehension. The Greek word *Logos*, in one of its primary senses, answered nearly to our word *Reason*. It denoted that faculty by which the mind disposes its ideas in their proper relations to each other: the Disposing Power, if I may so speak, of the mind. In reference to this primary sense, it was applied to the Deity, but in a wider significance. The Logos of God was regarded, not in its strictest sense, as merely the Reason of God, but under certain aspects, as the Wisdom, the Mind, the Intellect of God. To this the Creation of all things was *especially* ascribed. The conception may seem obvious in itself; but the Cause why the creation was primarily referred to the Logos, or Intellect of God, rather than to his goodness or omnipotence, is to be found in the Platonic Philosophy, as it existed about the time of Christ, and particularly as taught by the eminent Jewish philosopher, Philo of Alexandria."

" According to this philosophy, there existed an archetypal world of IDEAS, formed by God, the perfect model of the Sensible Universe; corresponding, so far as what is divine may be compared with what is human, to the plan of a building or city, which an architect forms in his own mind before commencing its erection. The faculty by which God disposed and arranged the world of IDEAS was his Logos, Reason, or Intellect. This world, according to one representation, was supposed to have its seat in the Logos or Mind of God; according to another, it was identified with the Logos. The Platonic philosophy further taught, that the Ideas of God were not merely the archetypes, but, in scholastic language, the essential forms of all created things. In this philosophy, matter in *its primary state*, 'rimitive matter, if I may so speak, was regarded merely as the sub-

stratum of attributes, being in itself devoid of all. Attributes, it is conceived, were impressed upon it by the Ideas of God, which Philo often speaks of under the figure of *seals*. These Ideas, indeed, constituted those attributes, becoming connected with primitive matter in an incomprehensible manner, and thus giving form and being to all things sensible. But the seat of these ideas, these formative principles, being the Logos, or Intellect of God; or, according to the other representation mentioned, these Ideas constituting the Logos, the Logos was, in consequence, represented as the great agent in creation. This doctrine being settled, the meaning of the Term gradually extended itself by a natural process, and came at last to comprehend *all the attributes of God manifested in the creation and government of the Universe*. These attributes, abstractly from God himself, were made an object of thought, under the name of the Logos. The Logos thus conceived, was necessarily personified or spoken of figuratively as a person. In our own language, in describing its agency,—agency, in its nature personal, and to be ultimately referred to God,—we might indeed avoid attaching a personal character to the Logos considered abstractly from God, by the use of the neuter pronoun *it*. Thus we might say, All things were made by *it*. But the Greek language afforded no such resource, the relative pronoun, in concord with Logos, being necessarily masculine. Thus the Logos or Intellect of God came to be, figuratively or literally, conceived of as an intermediate being between God and his creatures, the great agent in the creation and government of the universe." * * *

"The conception and the name of the Logos were familiar at the time when St. John wrote. They occur in the Apocryphal book of the Wisdom of Solomon. The writer, speaking of the destruction of the first-born of the Egyptians, says (xviii. 15):

"'Thine almighty Logos leapt down from heaven, from his royal throne, a fierce warrior, into the midst of a land of destruction.'"

In another passage, likewise, in the prayer ascribed to Solomon, he is represented as thus addressing God (ix. 1, 2):

> "God of our fathers, and Lord of mercy,
> Who hast made all things by thy Logos,
> And fashioned man by thy Wisdom." * * *

"St. John, writing in Asia Minor, where many, for whom he intended his Gospel, were familiar with the conception of the Logos, has probably, for this reason, adopted the term Logos, in the prolem

of his Gospel, to express that manifestation of God by Christ, which is elsewhere referred to the spirit of God."

"But to return: the conception that has been described having been formed of the Logos, and the Logos being, as I have said, necessarily personified, or spoken of figuratively as a person, it soon followed, as a natural consequence, that the Logos was by many *hypostatized*, or conceived of as a proper person. When the corrective of experience and actual knowledge cannot be applied, what is strongly imagined is very likely to be regarded as having a real existence; and the philosophy of the ancients was composed in great part of such imaginations. The Logos, it is to be recollected, was that power by which God disposed in order the Ideas of the archetypal world. But in particular reference to the creation of the material universe, the Logos came in time to be conceived of by many as hypostatized, as a proper person going forth, as it were, from God in order to execute the plan prepared, to dispose and arrange all things conformably to it, and to give sensible forms to *primitive matter*, by impressing it with the ideas of the archetypal world. In many cases in which the term 'Logos' occurs, if we understand by it the Disposing Power of God in a sense conformable to the notions explained, we may have a clearer idea of its meaning than if we render it by the term 'Reason,' or 'Wisdom,' or any other which our language offers." * * *

"From the explanations which have been given of the conceptions concerning the Logos of God, it will appear that this term properly denoted an attribute or attributes of God; and that upon the notion of an attribute or attributes, the idea of *personality* was superinduced." * * *

"It was his (St. John's) purpose in the introduction of his Gospel, to declare that Christianity had the same divine origin as the Universe itself; that it was to be considered as proceeding from the same power of God. Writing in Asia Minor, for readers, by many of whom the term 'Logos' was more familiarly used than any other, to express the attributes of God viewed in relation to his creatures, he adopted this term to convey his meaning, because from their associations with it it was fitted particularly to impress and affect their minds; thus connecting the great truths which he taught with their former modes of thinking and speaking. But upon the idea primarily expressed by this term, a new Conception, the Conception of the proper personality of those attributes, had been superinduced. This

doctrine, then, the doctrine of an hypostatized Logos, it appears to have been his purpose to set aside. He would guard himself, I think, against being understood to countenance it. The Logos, he teaches, was not the agent of God, but God himself. Using the term merely to denote the attributes of God as manifested in his works, he teaches that the operations of the Logos are the operations of God; that all conceived of under that name is to be referred immediately to God; that in speaking of the Logos we speak of God, 'That the Logos is God.'

"The Platonic Conception of a personal Logos, distinct from God, was the Embryo form of the Christian Trinity. If, therefore, the view just given of the purpose of St. John be correct, it is a remarkable fact, that his language has been alleged as a main support of that very doctrine the rudiments of which it was intended to oppose." —*Norton on the Trinity.*

I shall now give a paraphrase of the Introduction of St. John's Gospel in harmony with the Conception that the Logos is described first as dwelling in God—and afterwards as manifested through Christ—the Logos made flesh—"God manifest in the flesh,"—an expression which is so far from implying Trinitarianism, that it exactly expresses the Unitarian idea of Christianity as a revelation of God—of Deity *imaged* perfectly on the human scale—of the light of the knowledge of the glory of God on the face of Jesus Christ.

Proem of St. John's Gospel.

"In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God. It was in the beginning with God. By it all things were made, and without it was not any thing made, that was made. It was life (the source of life)—and the source of life or blessedness was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God. This man came as a witness to bear testimony concerning the light; that all men through him might believe. He was not the Light, but he was sent to bear testimony concerning the Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. It was in the world, and the world was made by it, and the world knew it not. It came unto its own, and its own received it not. But to as many as received it, it gave power to become the Sons of God (Logoi)—being born, not of favoured races, nor through the will of

the flesh, nor through the will of man, but being children of God. And the Logos became flesh (was manifested through a man, the Mind or Spirit * of God shown on the human Image), and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Romans ix. 5, page 32.

" Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came; God who is over all be blessed for ever." Amen.

Ὧν οἱ πατέρες, καὶ ἐξ ὧν ὁ Χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα· ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. Ἀμήν.

The objections made to our rendering of this passage are these:—

1. That *ὁ ὢν* coming first in the sentence must refer to the nominative (*χριστὸς*). But there is no grammatical rule to prevent *ὁ ὢν commencing* a sentence and referring to a *subsequent* nominative: so that to say it *must* refer to the preceding *χριστὸς* is only to take the desired interpretation for granted.

2. That another article is required before *θεος*, and the position of the words to be *Ὁ δὲ θεος ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων, κ. τ. λ.* If *θεος* had been placed first in the sentence the article would have been used, but the qualifying expression *ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων* more than supplies its place. A passage from Philo exactly parallel is cited by the Rev. W. Hincks in his very able Review of Dr. J. P. Smith's Scripture Testimony to the Messiah —*του προς ἀληθειαν οντος θεου.* Ed. 1640, (apud Middleton,) p. 860. Also Clem. Rom. ad Cor. cap. xxxii. *ὁ παντοκρατωρ θεος*, where *παντοκρατωρ* is equivalent to *ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων.* Eusebius has this passage, *τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς ὄμμα πρὸς τὸν ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸν καθαρῶς τείναντες.* See Jortin. Eccles. Hist. vol. ii. 235.

3. That *εὐλογητὸς* ought to come first in the sentence. But the words " for ever," *εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας*, whenever used, are placed at the end of the sentence, and this naturally draws *εὐλογητος* to the same position, to avoid awkwardness or ambiguity. In the cases where *θεος* has dependent words, then *ευλογητος* comes first, that the words connected by construction may not be awkwardly separated: in the

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* We find in the first beginnings of the Trinity, the Logos and the Holy Spirit identified. This is even angrily contended for by Tertullian. " What! when John said that the Logos was made flesh, and the angel" (respecting the miraculous conception) " that the Spirit was made flesh, did they mean any thing different?" —*Tertullian, Advers. Praxeam.* Cap. xxvi.

case of εὐλογητος having dependent words, as here, then θεος would naturally come first.

In the only three cases in which εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας occur in the New Testament they follow one another in this fixed order.

In the Septuagint, contrary to the statement of Whitby, there is one clear instance of a similar construction: Κυριος ὁ θεος εὐλογητος, Ps. lxviii. 19.

Finally, εὐλογητος is nowhere in the New Testament applied to Jesus.

4. That our rendering requires another substantive verb. Of such ellipsis examples might be given without number. See Rom. x. 12. 2 Cor. v. 5. Ephes. iv. 6, a case exactly in point. Rev. xiv. 13.

5. That there is an antithesis intended by St. Paul between "as concerning the flesh," and "God over all." But the sentence is not an antithesis but a climax closed by Christ, as the consummation: and at the close of a climax of blessings and privileges, acknowledgment almost spontaneously bursts out to God.

Comments on the Rev. Mr. Byrth's Lecture entitled "The Unitarian Interpretation of the New Testament based upon defective Scholarship, or on dishonest or uncandid Criticism."

Page 108.—"It does appear to me extraordinary, that my opponents should appear to complain of the introduction of critical and scholastic considerations into this discussion." We make no such complaint. We complain that the *essence* of Christianity should be derived from the Criticism and Interpretation of *controverted* passages. Will my reverend opponent state a single argument for Trinitarianism, or adduce a single scriptural evidence, not *fairly* open to hostile Criticism or Interpretation? To *us* the Revelation is not derived from any thing doubtful; it is derived from those impressions of Jesus the Christ which Trinitarianism itself receives. To us the Revelation is the Person, (in which we include his Life, Character, Destinies,) of the man Christ Jesus. We know our God when we know that he who was as full of grace as of truth was the Image of our Father's Mind: we know God's will for man when we look upon him who was perfected human nature: we know the connections of Heaven with Duty when we see the crucified made the glorified, and taken to the bosom of his Father.

Page 115.—"It does not, however, follow that, because the Unitarian interpretation of the New Testament bears this character, all Unitarians are defective Scholars, or uncandid or dishonest Critics. Many of them may have received their opinions through the channel of traditional education; and may never have deemed it obligatory upon them to examine the matter for themselves." So, we have the choice of any one of three characters, *viz.*, BAD SCHOLARS, DISHONEST CRITICS, or *So-called Christians, who know nothing and care nothing about the matter.* Does Mr. Byrth really think that this last refuge removes the insult of his Title, or softens its indictment? Some of *us*, confined to a choice among these three descriptions, *preach* Christianity, and are therefore certainly bound "to examine the matter" for ourselves; nor is it to us that the suspicion usually attaches of receiving our "opinions through the channels of a traditional education."

"The dogmata are too few, too general, too unimportant, to elicit

inquiry, or to excite anxiety as to their truth." There is some truth in this, though not exactly of the kind the author contemplated. The interest of Trinitarianism depends greatly on the number of its dogmata, their intricacy, their supposed necessity to salvation, the exactness of their right mutual positions. There is much in a saving *Theology*, having an intricate scheme, and whose main principles and evidences are external to the mind of the believer, and therefore constantly agitating him with apprehension as to whether he has disposed them according to the precise conditions of orthodoxy, to occupy and sometimes oppress minds that have little affinities with a saving *Religion*, a simple spirit of Worship, Duty, and Trust immortal. *But is it true* that these Unitarian doctrines are "unimportant" —The Fatherhood of God—the Brotherhood of Man—the relations of Jesus to God as His image, and to Man as his Model—the retributions of Eternity—the Heaven of Duty?

Page 119.—See the Note.—Surely Mr. Byrth will perceive the unfairness of concluding a Book to be *our* Standard, merely because some *other* parties, very unfavourably disposed towards us, choose to represent it as such.

Page 124.—See the Note.—"I have been charged with almost or altogether suppressing, in the delivery of this Discourse, the word 'controversially.'" I eagerly assure Mr. Byrth that no such charge was ever made, nor could be made with truth, and I am much grieved that any rumour has conveyed to him the pain of such an impression. Though using hard words to his opponents, and giving them the choice of *any one* of three *bad* characters, I believe him perfectly incapable of "dishonesty." Believing me to have made such a charge, whilst I do not excuse him for so believing upon hearsay, I feel obliged by his forbearance, and for a courtesy in denying the charge, which if made I should not have deserved. I complained that the "controversial" attitudes of Unitarianism were confounded with *its own peaceful and positive ones*, two things that were most carefully separated in the speeches from which Mr. Byrth took extracts; and that he represented as a description *of Unitarianism*, what was distinctly stated to be Unitarianism, "controversially" described. Mr. Byrth, though giving the *word* "controversially," overlooked its *meaning*.

Page 132.—" Epiphanius asserts that the Ebionites," &c.: also the note marked †.

As it is exceedingly inconvenient to repeat subjects and answers, and so never to get rid of a topic, I refer Mr. Byrth and my readers to note B, on the Ebionites and their Gospel, in the Appendix to the Second Lecture of our Course.

Page 140.—See the note.—" I cannot but express my satisfaction, that in the *very place* where this book was thus regarded as an authority, and thus earnestly recommended, it is now renounced and disclaimed."

I do not know what Mr. Byrth includes in " renouncing" and " disclaiming." If these words mean " rejecting as a standard authority," then in the place alluded to was the Improved Version *always* renounced and disclaimed.

The praise quoted in the note certainly requires much qualification. Nevertheless the Improved Version is neither renounced nor disclaimed. We have no predilection for the rude principle of taking things, in the mass, or leaving them, in the mass, without discrimination. And I fancy that if our opponents were in these matters *as much at liberty* as ourselves, there are some of their *standards* which would soon be thoroughly sifted.

Page 143.—" For even they would scarcely think highly of the scholarship of Bishop Pearce."

I have quoted Bishop Pearce, not for his learning, though unquestionably that was respectable, but for the sake of stating that the acceptance by a Bishop of the English Church of a certain interpretation ought to have screened " a reputed heretic" from the charge of accepting the same interpretation solely for the sake of an *a priori* meaning.

Page 146.—" Epiphanius has little authority with any one else." Mr. Byrth is quite right in his estimate of Epiphanius. But it is hardly wise for those who, like Mr. Byrth, rest their faith upon external testimonies, to look too closely into the characters of the witnesses, or raise doubts respecting them in the public mind. We know how much of the weight of these testimonies rests upon Eusebius—and I doubt not Mr. Byrth knows very well that he is clearly convicted of having interpolated one passage in Josephus, and corrupted another.

How can we tell how far this process of reconciliation was carried? Why is it that we have not the works of the Heretics, of whose *names* ecclesiastical History is so full?

Page 147.—See the Note.—Mr. Byrth seems to think it impossible to have worded the Title of his Lecture so as not to have insulted *some one*. Will he allow me to suggest what the Title might have been without offence, though not with exact truth of description—"Some of the interpretations of the Improved Version of the New Testament based upon defective Scholarship." To attribute "dishonesty" and want of "candour," Mr. Byrth will I am sure feel to be too vulgar to be altogether worthy of his character as a Critic and a Scholar. In the text of his Lecture (p. 122), he indeed states his belief that Unitarian Interpretation, *of every kind*, wants scholarship, or wants honesty—and it was to the proof of this statement that he ought to have applied himself, or else to have altered the Title of his Lecture.

Page 148.—Luke iii. 23.—"And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (*as was supposed*) the son of Joseph."

This passage was not introduced into the first part of Mr. Byrth's Lecture as originally delivered. I state this only to excuse myself for having taken no notice of it in the body of my Lecture. This is the case also with some other passages. There were also expressions and sentiments of Mr. Byrth spoken, but not printed. I would not state this were it not necessary to justify some passages in my own Lecture. I refer especially to an oratorical use that was made of a most objectionable and irreverent sentiment of Coleridge's, full of the very spirit of dogmatism and presumption. P. 161.

With regard to Luke iii. 23. The rendering of the Improved Version is that of Bishop Pearce, who I suppose had no heretical reason for preferring it. I confess it does not seem natural. Dr. Carpenter thinks the words "as he was supposed," put in to guard against some Gnostic or Platonic error, and for the purpose of stating distinctly that he *was* the son of Joseph, as he was supposed to be. The same writer acutely remarks that it is most improbable, indeed next to impossible, that any writer should trace our Lord's descent from David *through Joseph*, and then declare that Joseph was only *supposed* to be his father, thus nullifying his own genealogy. Kuinoel gives a suggestion of Boltenius, to which he evidently inclines that ὡς ἐνομίζετο

applies not to the supposed descent of Jesus from Joseph, but to the *whole* genealogy. I annex his note.

" *Boltenius* ad h. l. suspicatus est, verba ὡς ἐνομίζετο, non tantum eo referenda esse, quod Judæi falso putaverint, Josephum esse Christi parentem, sed spectari quoque his verbis genealogiam ipsam h. l. exhibitam, eaque reddenda esse: *hanc putabant esse Jesu genealogiam, erat pater ejus Josephus, hujus pater Eli*, etc., ut adeo Lucas professus sit, se inseruisse genealogiam, prouti ea in manus ipsius venisset, seque authentiam illius acrius defendere nolle. Hac ratione admissa, explicari forte etiam posset, quî factum sit, ut Lucas genealogiam ipsi suspectam, in Evangelio infantiæ Jesu propositam, ad calcem illius fortasse adjectam, h. l. inseruerit, quod nempe aliquamdiu dubius hæsisset, an eam reciperet. Alii opinati sunt, hanc genealogiam, cum diversa sit ab ea, quæ in Matthæi commentariis reperitur, cum laxiori vinculo superioribus annexa sit, non a Luca ipso, sed serius additam esse."

Page 149.—See the Note.—" Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary: of whom (Mary) was born (or was begotten) Jesus who is called the Christ." " Now is it possible to declare, in plainer terms, that, though Jesus was born of Mary, who was married to Joseph, yet that Joseph *did not beget him*."—*Magee*. Great is the ingenuity here, wonderfully misapplied. Is it not clear that St. Matthew was tracing the descent of Jesus from David, and that he brings down the chain to the very last link, namely Joseph, that is, the very Joseph necessary to be included, the husband of the mother of Jesus? *That* Joseph, the very husband of Mary, from whom Christ was born, being thus shown to be a lineal descendant of David, the Evangelist stops. What could he do more? His object being to trace the descent of Jesus from David, what could be more natural than, when he arrived at Joseph, to say—here is the unbroken succession, for this is the very man who was the husband of that Mary from whom Jesus was born. Of course the writer could not alter the form of expression until he arrived at the very man whom he wished to identify as the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus—and the reason for altering it then is very obvious.

If Joseph was not the father of Jesus, the genealogy is vitiated, for it is *through Joseph* that the descent is traced.

Pages 157, 158.—" He was in the world, and the world was made by

him, and the world knew him not." "He was in the world, and the world was enlightened by him, and yet the world knew him not." —I. V. This interpretation cannot, I think, be defended. I am sorry it was ever given. Yet Mr. Byrth's sarcasm is quite powerless against it, "what kind of light is that which blinds the eyes which it was intended to illuminate?" in the face of the text—"the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness *comprehendeth* it not;" unless he adopts the interpretation of some of the Fathers,—"And the darkness did not insinuate itself into the light, interpenetrate and quench it."

Page 161.—The liberality of ROBERT HALL. We desire to speak with respect of this great and good man. But perhaps it would be impossible to name a man more illiberal as a controversialist, and who allowed himself such an unmeasured use of uncharitable language. It was only the other day I learned an anecdote of him from the person to whom the words were spoken, descriptive at once of his vigour and his rancour: speaking of the Unitarians he said—"they are inspired from *beneath*,"—with a look, said my informant, never to be forgotten. Many passages might be brought from his writings, especially his Reviews, demonstrative of this temper,—but the passage given by Mr. Byrth himself, in which he is satisfied to rest conclusions so momentous and fearful upon reasonings so arbitrary and vague, is quite enough. When any man acquainted with the state of Theological opinion in the world, and with the impossibility of uniformity, can fix upon his own opinions as essential, and run a doctrinal line between Heaven and Hell, we require no further tests of his "liberality," unless indeed he is, what Mr. Hall was not, only a traditional believer.

I have already remarked that some of my observations apply more to the spoken than to the printed lecture. Were it possible to efface the impressions made by the speaker, and which required to be counteracted, gladly would I efface every word of personal reference from my pages. Even now, with the recollection fresh upon my mind, of the unsparing contempt, both literary and moral, expressed by words and tones, not conveyed by the printed page, when the speaker, feeling that the sympathies of his audience were with him to the full, and that their knowledge of the subject required from him *the*

broadest statements, to render it intelligible, gave himself to the excitement of the moment,—I have more than doubted whether it would not have been better to have avoided every personal allusion. I believe that I have in no case overstated or misrepresented what was *said*. I deeply grieve to fix upon my pages the suggestions, perhaps, of momentary excitement, which Mr. Byrth's better feeling has, in some instances, refused to record—and that the obligation I was under to remove an impression actually made, does not permit me to give full effect to this working of a kinder spirit, the manifestations of which, in other ways, I have respectfully to acknowledge.

UNITARIAN AND TRINITARIAN CONTROVERSY AT LIVERPOOL.

Syllabus of a Course of Lectures now in course of delivery successively.

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bruary 13.
2. The Integrity of the Canon of Holy Scripture maintained against Unitarian Objections - *Rev. Dr. Tattershall.*

bruary 20.
3. The Unitarian Interpretation of the New Testament based upon defective Scholarship, or on dishonest or uncandid Criticism - *Rev. T. Byrth.*

bruary 27.
4. The proper Humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ - - - *Rev. J. Jones.*

rch 6.
5. The proper Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ proved from Prophecies, Types, and Jewish Ordinances - - - - - *Rev. J. H. Stewart.*

rch 13.
6. The proper Deity of our Lord the only ground of Consistency in the Work of Redemption - *Rev. H. M'Neile.*

rch 20.
7. The Doctrine of the Trinity proved as a consequence from the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ - - - - - *Rev. D. James.*

rch 27.
8. The Atonement indispensable to the Necessities of Fallen Man, and shown to stand or fall with the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ - - - - - *Rev. R. P. Buddicom.*

ril 3.
9. The Deity, Personality, and Operations of the Holy Ghost - *Rev. J. E. Bates.*

ril 10.
10. The Sacraments practically rejected by Unitarians - - *Rev. H. W. M'Grath.*

ril 17.
11. The Nicene and Athanasian Creeds explained and defended *Rev. R. Davies.*

ril 24.
12. The Personality and Agency of Satan - - - - - *Rev. H. Stowell.*

y 1.
13. The Eternity of future Rewards and Punishments - - - *Rev. W. Dalton.*

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ON TUESDAY EVENINGS IN PARADISE-ST. CHAPE

1839.—February 12.
1. The practical importance of the Unitarian Controversy - - *Rev. J. H. Thom*

February 19.
2. The Bible; what it is, and what it is not - - - - - *Rev. J. Martineau*

February 26.
3. Christianity not the property of Critics and Scholars, but the gift of God to all men - - - *Rev. J. H. Thom*

March 5.
4. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" - - - *Rev. H. Giles.*

March 12.
5. The proposition 'That Christ is God,' proved to be false from the Jewish and the Christian Scriptures - - - - - *Rev. J. Martineau*

March 19.
6. The scheme of Vicarious Redemption inconsistent with itself, and with the Christian idea of Salvation - - - - - - *Rev. J. Martineau*

March 26.
7. The unscriptural Origin and Ecclesiastical History of the Doctrine of the Trinity - - - *Rev. J. H. Thom*

April 2.
8. Man, the Image of God - - *Rev. H. Giles.*

April 9.
9. The Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, who dwelleth in us, and teacheth all things - - - *Rev. J. H. Thom*

April 16.
10. Christianity without Priest, and without Ritual - - - - *Rev. J. Martineau*

April 23.
11. Creeds the foes of Heavenly Faith; the allies of worldly Policy - *Rev. H. Giles.*

April 30.
12. The Christian view of Moral Evil here - - - - - - *Rev. J. Martineau*

May 7.
13. The Christian view of Retribution hereafter - - - - *Rev. H. Giles.*

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THERE IS ONE GOD,

AND ONE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN,

THE MAN CHRIST JESUS.

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN

PARADISE STREET CHAPEL,

LIVERPOOL,

ON TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 1839.

BY

REV. HENRY GILES.

BEING THE FOURTH OF A SERIES, TO BE DELIVERED WEEKLY, IN ANSWER TO A COURSE OF LECTURES AGAINST UNITARIANISM, IN CHRIST CHURCH, LIVERPOOL, BY THIRTEEN CLERGYMEN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

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LECTURE IV.

"THERE IS ONE GOD, AND ONE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN, THE MAN CHRIST JESUS."

BY REV. HENRY GILES.

"THERE IS ONE GOD, AND ONE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN, THE MAN CHRIST JESUS."—1 *Tim.* ii. 5.

THE passage I have read suggests the subject of my lecture, the position in which we stand to our opponents will suggest the tendency of the commentary. The text announces the two great truths on which our entire system of Christianity is based, and ours in all essential points, we think, coincides with simple, with evangelical Christianity. The truths propounded in the text are, the Unity of God, and the Unity of Christ.—A unity in each case absolute and perfect, without division of nature or distinction of person. We believe that God is one,—that he is one being, one mind, one person, one agent. And this belief, and no other, we can deduce from the works of creation, and the teachings of the Scriptures.

That God is one universally and absolutely, we have impressed upon us from the order of creation; that he is great, we learn from the magnitude of his works; and that he is good, we learn from their blessedness and beauty. This sublime truth is illustrated in every region of existence, so far as we know it, and every illustration is an argument. It is written on the broad and immortal heavens in characters of glory and light; it is manifested in that mighty law which binds atom to atom into a world, and world to world in a

system, and system to system, until from that wonderful universe which science can traverse, we arise to him, whom no knowledge can fathom, whom no limits can bound, and in contemplating whom science must give place to faith.

The heavens declare the glory of God, the firmament showeth his handy-work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge—and that God is one, is proclaimed in this speech, and manifested in this knowledge. It gleams in the light, it breathes in the air, it moves in the life of all created nature; it is the harmony of creation, and the spirit of providence, the inspiration of reason, and the consistency of wisdom. The existence of one Supreme Intelligence is the Testimony of Nature, and to the same import are the testimonies of Scripture. We are told, and told it in every variety of tone, that to believe one God in three persons is absolutely needful to Salvation, yet we may read from Genesis to Revelations without finding such a doctrine either as a statement of truth, or a means of sanctity: but the simple and unqualified declaration that God is one, without any of these dogmatical distinctions which men of later ages have invented, I need not tell a Bible-reading audience, are interwoven with the whole texture of revelation. It was that for which Abraham left his home, and went forth a wanderer from his family and his nation; it was that for which Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and for which he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God; it was that over which he had long thought in his shepherd-life in an Arabian wilderness; it was that with which he was more deeply inspired in the solemn retirements of Mount Horeb; it was that to which all his laws and institutions pointed. Our Saviour took the doctrine as a known maxim—and in this his disciples followed him. We have then the truth brought down to us through Scripture, in patriarchal tradition, in Mosaic legislation, in the poetry of prophets, in the words of Christ, in the preach-

ing of apostles,—and we have it brought down to us without one of those distinctions with which it has been since surrounded by theological ingenuity. We are zealous in the assertion of it, not for its mere metaphysical correctness, but for its moral power and its moral consistency. It does not divide our hearts, and it does not confuse our heads. It leads our minds up to one spirit, infinite in power, infinite in wisdom, and infinite in goodness. Without confusion or perplexity we can trace God in all and all in God: in the atom that trembles in a sunbeam, as in the planet that moves in boundless light, from the blush of a flower to the glory of the heavens—from the throb of an insect to the life of an immortal. The Unitarian faith in the universal father is clear, simple, and defined; inflicting no violence on our understandings, and raising no conflicts in our affections. One, and one in the strictest sense, is our parent, one is our sovereign, one is our highest benefactor, one is our protector and our guide, one is our deliverer and sanctifier; one has bestowed all we possess, one alone can give all we hope for: one is holy who demands our obedience; one is merciful who pities our repentance; one is eternal in whose presence we are to live, and therefore whether we present our adorations in dependence, or bow down in submission, or send forth our praises in gratitude, there is one, and but one, to whom our aspirations can ascend, and to whom our hearts can be devoted. Thus impressed, we must feel united to one Father in filial obedience, and to all men in a common and fraternal relationship; we cannot look upon some as selected, and upon others as outcasts; we cannot look upon some as purchased, and upon others as reprobate; we cannot look upon some as sealed with the spirit of grace for ever unto glory everlasting, and upon others as abandoned, unpitied, and unprotected, the victims of an everlasting malediction. We regard men as bound in a community of good, consequently as bound in a community of praise; we regard them

as struggling in like trials, and therefore indebted to each other for mutual sympathy; we regard them as heirs of the same glory, and on the level of their heavenly hopes, standing on a basis of sacred and eternal equality. If these sentiments are false, they are at least generous, and it is not often that generosity is found in company with falsehood. Alas, how many heart-burning enmities, how many deadly persecutions have been caused by different apprehension of God's nature or God's worship; how often have these differences broken all the fraternal bonds of humanity, made man the greatest enemy to man,—more savage and cruel than the beast, yea, and cruel in proportion to the zeal he pretended for his God. But never could this have been, had men believed in God, had men believed in Christ—had they believed in God as an impartial and universal Father, had they believed in Christ as an equal and universal brother.—Then we could have all sent our mingled prayers to the skies, and with a Christianity as broad as our earth, and as ample as our race, and generous as the soul of Jesus, we could have taken all mankind to our heart. We maintain it not in mere abstract speculation, but because we consider it a positive and a vital truth. Were the point metaphysical and not moral, we conceive it would be little worthy of dispute—and in that sense I for one would have small anxiety, whether God existed in three persons or in three thousand. In like manner we hold the simple and absolute unity of Christ; a unity of nature, a unity of person, and a unity of character. But as this topic is to occupy so large a space in the present lecture, I shall here forbear from further comments.

The statement of our subject in a text, was alluded to by the Christ Church Lecturer, in a tone that at least approached to censure. But we consider it amongst our privileges, that we can express our main principles in the simple and obvious language of Scripture; and if in this case deep scholarship and acute criticism be needed to give it to common minds

a meaning different from that in which we understand it, the fault certainly is not ours.—Neither, indeed, is ours the blame, if a similar phraseology pervades the whole Christian Scriptures; that in every page we read of God and Christ, and never of God in three persons, or of Christ in two natures. To find out such distinctions, we leave to Scholastic ingenuity; to give them definition and perpetuity, we consign to the framers of creeds and articles—and to receive and reverence them we turn over to the admirers of Athanasian perspicuity. We take the New Testament as the best formulary; we are satisfied with a religion direct and simple in its principles, and we long not for a religion of deducibles. We have been accused of tortuous criticism; and although we desire not to retort the accusation on our opponents, so far, I mean, as it implies moral delinquency, we cannot forbear observing that the intellectual sinuosities by which some of these deductions have been drawn from the New Testament is to us, certainly, a subject of not a little admiration. Our motive in selecting this text was the best of all which governs men in the use of language, simply that with greatest brevity and greatest perspicuity, it enunciates our opinions. Our opponents, however, have no right to complain; the advantage of being first in the field was on their side, and the struggle was not provoked on our part but on theirs: they of course selected their own subjects, and they suggested ours. They could, therefore, have had no uncertainty either as to our views or interpretation of the text. I would not allude to a matter so small, were it not for the contradictory delinquencies with which Unitarians are accused—one time they are charged with dreading an appeal to Scripture, and when by the very title of their subject, they tacitly appeal to Scripture, there is wanting still no occasion to blame.

What, in Unitarian views, is Christ the Man, and what is Christ the Mediator, shall make the subject of the present Lecture.

I.—First, I beg your attention to the enquiry as to what we believe of Christ as man. To this we answer, that in his nature we think him simply and undividedly human; that in his character we regard him morally perfect. We cannot recognize in Christ a mixture of natures, and we wonder that any who read the gospel's records can. That he was simply and merely human, is a conclusion which meditation on these Records but fixes more profoundly on our understandings, and makes more precious to our faith. We derive the conclusion from Christ's own language—"Ye seek to kill me," he says, "a *man*—which hath told you the truth, which I heard of God."—Again, when a worldly and ambitious individual, mistaking the true nature of this kingdom, desired to become his disciple: "The foxes, said Jesus, have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not whereon to lay his head." Instances, too many to repeat, might be enumerated; but the only other I shall adduce is that in which Christ's human nature speaks from its deepest sorrows, and its strongest love: when Jesus, as he hung upon the Cross, saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing by, he saith unto his mother, "Woman, behold thy son." It is vain to tell us of an infinite God veiled behind this suffering and sweetness, the mind repels it, despite of all the efforts of theology.*

The impression of a simple humanity was that which he left on the mind of his countrymen. What other impression could they have of one whom they daily saw amongst them as of themselves? who came weary to rest in their habitations; who came hungry to sit at their boards; whom they met in their streets sinking with fatigue; whom they might see upon their wayside asking drink from a well; one whom they saw weep over their troubles and rejoice in their gladness. Nay, the very intenseness of his humanity became

* See Note on John xii.

a matter of accusation. To many it seemed subversive of religion. That spirit which sympathized with human beings, in their joys and woes, which not only loved the best, but would not cast out the worst, was what those of strait and narrow hearts could not understand. He came eating and drinking, and they called him a man gluttonous and a wine-bibber. Had he said long prayers at the corners of their streets, and been zealous for the traditions of the fathers, they would have revered him as a saint. Those who were panoplied in their own spiritual sufficiency knew not how he could be the friend of sinners; how he could associate with the deserted and the excommunicated; how he could take to his compassion the weary and the heavy-laden. The pharisee who proudly asked him to his house, but gave him no salute, no oil for his stiffened joints, and no water for his parched feet, had nothing within him whereby to interpret the feeling of Jesus towards her who anointed his head with ointment, washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Yes, it was this truth and fulness of humanity which made Jesus hateful to the pharisees, but loved and blessed by the poor; it was this that made the common people hear him gladly, and gave his voice a power which they never felt in the teachings of the scribes; which drew crowds around him, in wilderness and mountain, that hung raptured on the glad tidings which he preached. The flatterers of Herod on a particular occasion cried out, "It is the voice of a god and not of a man;" but no one ever thought of insulting Jesus with such an exclamation.

The guilt of the Jews in crucifying Christ has been alluded to in the present controversy. But this is only an additional proof that Jesus left no other conviction on the minds of his countrymen than that he was simply a man. That our views diminish this guilt has been urged as a powerful objection against us; but, with reverence I say it, the objection turns more against Christ himself. Either then he was simply man,

or being Deity, he suppressed the evidence which would prove it, and allowed this people to contract the awful guilt of killing a God-man. If the first be true, the guilt asserted has no existence; if the second, I leave you to judge in what light it places the sincerity and veracity of an incarnate Deity. There is neither declaration nor evidence afforded by Christ by which the Jews could think him more than man. On the contrary he disclaims expressly the far lower honour at which they thought his presumption aimed, by a quotation from their own Scriptures: "It is written in your law," he observes, "I said ye are Gods. If he called them Gods, unto whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God."* There is then no declaration, nor yet is there evidence. Miracles were not such: for the Jewish mind and memory were filled with instances of these, and to the performers of which they never thought of attributing a nature above humanity. If Christ was more, the fact should have been plainly manifested, for the idea of a God in a clothing of flesh was one not only foreign but repugnant to every Jewish imagination. The difference between the Jews and pagans in this particular is not a little striking. Jesus raised the dead before their eyes, and yet they thought him but a man having great power from the Creator. Paul, in company with Barnabas, healed a cripple at Lystra, and the populace cried out, "The Gods are come down to us in the likeness of men." When Paul in Melita shook without harm the viper from his hand, the spectators who at first considered him a murderer, changed their minds, and said that he was a God. In proportion then to the natural and religious repugnance which the Jews had to humanize the divinity, should there have been clearness in the proof of it on the part of Jesus. No such proof was given.

* John x. 34—36.

The greatest miracles of Jesus disturbed not the conviction of the Jews in his simple human nature. The woman of Samaria, wondering at once at his charity and his knowledge, called her neighbours to see a *man* who told her all things whatsoever she did. She asked them, then is not this the Christ? The blind man awakened by his touch from thick darkness into the marvellous light of God's creation describes him but as a man who anointed his eyes. The Jewish officers struck dumb before his wisdom, declare that never *man* spake like this man. The Jews who stood around him and saw Lazarus, whose body had been already dissolving, come forth quickened from the grave, beheld in him but the powerful and the loving friend. The multitudes of Judea, who in desert and city were amazed at his wonderful works, simply "glorified God who had given such power unto men."

Similar was the impression which he left upon his intimate friends. What would have been their emotions had they a belief that continually they were in the bodily presence of the incarnate God? How would they not have bowed themselves in the dust, and stopped the familiar word as it trembled on their lips? Instead of approaching with unfearing hearts, how would they not have stood afar off and apart, and gazed with awe upon a being who was pacing a fragment of the world he created, instead of clinging to him as one of themselves? Whenever they saw his mysterious appearance, would they not call on the mountains to fall upon them, and the hills to cover them? But not so was it. The lowly, the humble, and the poor rejoiced to see him, and were glad when he entered their habitations. They were consoled by the benediction of peace with which he sanctified his approach and his departure. For him was the gratulations of loving friends, and for him were the smiles of little children. In Bethany, Martha, when he came, was busy in much serving, and the meek and gentle Mary sat at his feet to drink in his heavenly wisdom. At the last supper John leaned upon his bosom.

At the cross, when the head of Jesus bent heavily in anguish, and solitary torture was wearing away his life, there again we meet the same disciple, there also we meet the mother of Jesus and the grateful Magdalene, all three oppressed with darkest affliction and despair. Some of them we again behold at the sepulchre in utmost alarm. Now this grief at the cross and this perplexity at the tomb is consistent with no other supposition than that they regarded him simply as a man. Why else should they have been afflicted? What though his enemies were strong, if knowing him to be God, they must also have known that his power was boundless and his triumph certain. This sorrow and uncertainty, I repeat, can have no other foundation than a belief in his simple humanity. And surely if his mother had only such impression, it is hard to expect that the Jews at the time, and many Christians since, could have had any other.

I anticipate the objection that the glories of his deity were concealed, and that this concealment was necessary to his mediatorial work. I answer then, that when he had departed, and when such a secresy was no longer needful, his apostles on some of the most solemn occasions merely asserted his humanity, on occasions, too, when, if he were God as well as man, the whole truth were to be expected. Paul,* in announcing him as the great and final judge of the world, calls him no more than man. Nor does his language assume a higher import when he speaks of him as the pattern and pledge of immortality.† No other conclusion is to be drawn from the address of Peter to Cornelius; and if a belief of Christ's deity be necessary to salvation, the centurion might, for anything Peter asserted, have gone direct to perdition.‡ Still more remarkable is it, that in this apostle's first public address after the departure of his master to the skies, we have nothing more than the same declaration. The occasion and the circumstances not only justified, but demanded the highest announcement that could be made

* Acts xvii. 30, 31. † 1 Cor. xv. 21, 47. ‡ Acts. x.

respecting Christ. The disciples had just seen him taken up into heaven, and the awe of the ascension was yet upon their hearts. He who had trod this weary earth in many sorrows was taken from their sight. They who had recently seen his blood streaming warmly on Calvary, had come fresh from the glory of Olivet. He who had been their suffering companion and instructor was now their blessed and triumphant master. Alone in the midst of a gainsaying and persecuting world, with gladness solemnized by reverence, and victory tempered by grief, they had assembled to await the promised Comforter. After that event they were to be separated, and each was to take his own path in the moral wilderness that stretched far and desolately before him. The Spirit of Promise came. The cloven tongues of fire fell upon them: that beautiful emblem of the eloquent spirit of the gospel that was to carry light and heat to the hearts of all generations, and through every language of earth; that beautiful emblem of a Christianity which might exist in many forms, but be at the same time enlightened and enflamed by the soul of a common charity. Multitudes from all nations were collected in the Holy City;—under the influence of recent and solemn events Peter rises to address them. The tragedy of Calvary was yet fresh in the general imagination, the stain of a slave and malefactor's death was still dark on the forehead of Christianity. This surely was the time to cover the ignominy that lay on the humanity of Jesus by proclaiming the resplendent glory of his godhead. This was especially to be expected from Peter. He had on a preceding occasion spurned the idea of such a shameful death, though coming from Christ's own lips; now was the time to pour the glory of the God over the humiliation of the man; he too, who in an hour of weakness denied his master, was the one who in the time of his strength and repentance would be most ready to vindicate and assert his highest honour. It is said that the apostles were not

thoroughly inspired, and did not fully know Christ before the day of Pentecost. But this was the day of Pentecost. If, besides, it was the speaker's object—as indeed it must have been—that Christ should be rightly and widely known, now was the opportunity to send forth his name and nature through every kingdom and in every tongue. If, according to the doctrine some time since propounded in Christ Church, the sin of the Jews was dark in proportion to the grade of being in which we place the Saviour, now was the time, while the event was recent, to strike their hearts with terror and compunction. Contrast, then, these natural, these fair and unexaggerated expectations, with the actual speech of Peter, and without a word of comment the contrast is itself the strongest argument. "Ye men of Israel hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves know: him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." (Acts ii. 22, 24.) Had you been listeners to this address, I ask your candour, I ask your intellect, could you conceive that the apostle was speaking, not of a glorified man, but of an incarnate Deity? No, certainly.

The testimony of Peter thus clearly given, is more and more confirmed as we look upon the life of Jesus. In every stage of that life we see him human, and though in all moral purity and moral grandeur, yet *simply* human. We are not ashamed of our belief. No, we glory in it, and we rejoice in it. We glory in it, for it is the proof that the elements of our nature can be moulded into such beauty; and we rejoice in it, for it is the proof that he who left a religion for the immortal heart of man was himself purely and simply of the nature he would sanctify. We see him as the infant

cradled in Bethlehem, the nurseling hanging on a mother's care, and we escape the moral and intellectual confusion of joining the omnipotence of a God with the feebleness of a babe. We see him in maturer years in his social relations and social intercourse casting a holy light around him, and spreading the influence of all that is most blessed in human affections. We destroy not the virtue of the man by absorbing it in the glory of the God. Human, and *only* human, we see him in goodness, in duty, and in suffering. Even in his most marvellous works of mercy, so harmonious is his power with our common nature, that we feel as if they were merely ordinary acts of kindness. When he compassionated the widow's anguish and restored her son; when pitying the blind, he opened their eyes to the joy and beauty of light; when to the ears of the deaf he gave an inlet to the music of nature and the voice of friendship; when he cast out the dumb spirit and unclosed sealed lips in hymns of gratitude and praise; when he fed multitudes on the mountain's brow; when lepers went clean from his presence to their fellows and their homes; when parents clung to their restored children, and friends who had separated in despair met again in hope,—wonderful as are all these events, we connect them with the *man* Christ Jesus, the real, simple, holy, and perfect man.

The lecturer in Christ Church stated three peculiarities which distinguished the Unitarian from the orthodox belief in Christ's humanity. The third of these was his pre-existence. The Lecturer defined with admirable accuracy the essentials of humanity, one of which, as would be universally admitted, was *to be born*. I was therefore not prepared to hear the proper humanity of Christ before he was born most zealously defended. I look upon it, however, as a mere oversight, and no doubt it will be corrected in the printed lecture.

The main point is, however, that of Christ's pre-existence,

which independently of mistake in arrangement or expression is a fair topic of argument and discussion. The Lecturer quoted a number of texts from the evangelist John,—from any other of the gospel-writers he could not have taken the shadow of a proof: these he seemed to think invincible evidence. Good scholars, however, and candid critics, aye, and honest Christians, have found such explanations of these expressions as satisfied both their intellects and their conscience. Orthodox commentators are aware that the idiom of the New Testament frequently uses the tense grammatically past to signify events which are actually future. I ask those critics what they have urged, what they usually urge, against Roman Catholic controversialists, who, in proving the doctrine of transubstantiation, quote the text, "This is my body which *is* broken for you." What says the Protestant opponent? Oh, it is a mere idiomatic expression, by which an event is represented as complete which is yet to be accomplished. In like manner and with a like interpretation, we hear the orthodox use the phrase, "The lamb *slain* from the foundation of the world." They have in this case no scruple to speak of that as actually existing which was merely contemplated in eternal foreknowledge. If it be said that all events are present to the mind of God, so we answer are all persons; and so was Christ. This view of the subject has satisfied many reflective, and whatever our opponents may think, many able and honest minds. But I avail myself of this opportunity to state distinctly and plainly, that though challenged by our opponents in the title of their subject to discuss this point, it is one on which Unitarians have great differences of opinion, but one which would not disturb a moment's harmony in Unitarian Churches. Personally the Lecturers in the present controversy, on our side, do not believe the pre-existence of Christ; but there are congregations and individuals amongst us, with whom we hold, and wish to hold, kindly, brotherly, and Christian communion, who cling

to this doctrine most sacredly and most reverently. We all agree in maintaining the absolute unity of God, and if I may so speak, the CREATURESHIP of Christ. We desire to bind our charity to no dogmas, and we simply say, with the Apostle, "Let even man be persuaded in his own mind."

On this point, and indeed in this discussion generally, I have observed with great pain a disposition on the part of our opponents to connect the venerable name of Priestley with odium. It is an unworthy office for men of education in the nineteenth century. We take not the authority of Priestley, nor of any other, except Jesus. One is our Master, even *Christ*: and all we are brethren. But in venerating Priestley, yea, and in loving his memory, we are guilty of no Sectarianism, we but agree with the generous, the excellent, the enlightened of the earth: we but agree with Robert Hall, a stern but eloquent Trinitarian, who in allusion to the Birmingham riots, deprecated in glowing language the insults offered to philosophy in "the first of her sons." Both his critical and his religious opinions are fair subjects for investigation and opposition. But great sacrifices and honourable consistency should render his moral character sacred, if any thing could melt the stony heart of polemical austerity. When we hear, as lately we did hear, that Priestley sought not for truth, but for arguments to sustain a system, we are not only impelled to ask, with Pilate, "What is truth?" but also to inquire, "Who are those who seek it?" One thing we do know, that if he gave himself to a system, it was a devotion to one which had little wherewith to recompense him; and we know also that as far as the good things of this world is concerned, that he might have turned his devotion to a far better purpose. Instead of having his home and his all shattered in the storm of popular turbulence, instead of being left houseless in the land of his nativity, he might have been great amongst the heads of colleges, or first upon the bench of Bishops; instead of being expatriated

amidst vulgar execration, he might have spent his life fairing sumptuously every day, clothed in purple and fine linen, with a dignified hypocrisy; instead of burying his later sorrows in a foreign land, and dropping there his last and most bitter tears, and leaving there his venerable dust, and his still more venerable memory, to the shame of England, and to the immortal honour of his most generous and hospitable entertainers, we might now have had proposals for a national monument to him, long lists of subscribers' names, and loud clamours of exulting praise. One consolation at least was left: his right hand was clean, and had he been dragged to the stake he need never have thrust it in the flame for having been the instrument to give signature to a lie, from a beggarly, a dastardly, and a cowardly fear of death. If he could look from where he lives in heaven, he would have a still nobler consolation, in being aware that, despite of bigots, his name is treasured in venerated recollection with the pious and philosophical of all sects and parties—that to give him due and most beautiful praise* was amongst the last earthly acts of a kindred spirit, but of another soil, that fanatics may rant and rage, but the good will love.—That when this, with such controversies in general, sink into the common and oblivious grave to which all polemical divinity is doomed, the good his invention have given to mankind will survive, and the witness he has left of an upright conscience will be an everlasting example.

The conviction of his reason, it is true, was so strong against the pre-existence of Christ, that he would suppose the apostle misunderstood the Saviour's words, or the amanuensis mistranscribed the apostle's language. This was urged as a mighty accusation, as a most blasphemous transgression. There are here an opinion and an alternative. The opinion is the belief in Christ's simple humanity; the alternative is merely to suppose the want of memory in an evangelist,

* Cuvier. See Note 1.

or the want of accuracy in a copyist. Place in contrast to this Coleridge as quoted by our opponents. He has also an opinion and an alternative—his opinion is, that Christ was God, and his alternative is, that if *not God* he was a *deceiver*. If Dr. Priestley was wrong, he left not only Christ but his apostles morally blameless—if Coleridge mistook, he attributed directly and without compromise the want of even common honesty to the Author of our religion: I leave you to judge between the two cases. I do not wish to disparage erring and departed genius; but when the name of Coleridge is called up in my mind in connection with that of Priestley, it is not in human nature to avoid comparison. The one steeped the best part of his life in opium, the other spent it in honourable toil; the one squandered his brilliant and most beautiful genius in discursive efforts and magical conversations, the other with heroic self denial shut himself up in dry and laborious studies for the physical good, and the moral wants of mankind; the one wrote sweet and wild and polished poesy for their pleasure, the other has left discoveries for their endless improvement. Yet orthodoxy builds for one the shrine of a saint,—but like those who in other days dug up the bones of Wickliff to be burned, drags forth the memory of the other from the peaceful and forgiving past, to inflict an execution of which we might have supposed his lifetime had a sufficient endurance. Tranquil in the far-off and quiet grave be the ashes of the Saint and Sage: his soul is beyond the turmoils and battles of this fighting world. When these who are now in strife shall be at last in union, his will not be the spirit to whom that blessed consummation will give least enjoyment.

The preacher in Christ Church made some lengthened observations on the two-fold nature of Jesus. This topic will more properly be included in another lecture. I only mention it here for the purpose of making a passing remark. The preacher's language implied that among our reasons for re-

jecting the doctrine is, that it is a mystery. Now we maintain that a mystery is properly no doctrine, for it can be neither affirmed or denied. The lecturer observed that there are mysteries in life and nature. If by such he meant facts which we do not fully comprehend, or ultimate facts beyond which we cannot penetrate, he is right. But of these we assert nothing, of these we deny nothing. Intellectually or spiritually they are in no sense subjects of contemplation. The preacher, if my memory deceives me not, maintained that philosophy has also mysteries. The principles or phenomena of Philosophy are not mysteries—and so far as they are mysteries they are not philosophy. We reject not the doctrine proposed to us on any such ground. We reject it, not because we do not understand the terms in which it is expressed, but because we *do* understand them, and find them equally repugnant to reason and to Scripture. We reject it because it does equal violence to faith and intellect; we reject it, not only from the want of consistency, but the want of evidence.

The apology for mystery made by the defenders of the incarnation has been as often, as ably, and as successfully used by the advocates of Transubstantiation. Among other questions, we are asked by both parties—it is a favourite illustration—if we know how a grain of wheat germinates and fructifies! Without hesitation we reply—no. And not only do we not understand this *how*, but many others which might seem very much simpler. But where, I ask, is the analogy? A grain of wheat is buried in the earth, and the spirit of Universal Life prepares it for reproduction, and in the harvest it comes forth abundantly multiplied, to make glad the hearts of men. On this point I am equally willing to confess my ignorance and my gratitude. All the facts are not known to me, but such as I do know are perfectly consistent with each other. If I am told that I know not how a grain of wheat germinates, I admit it without hesitation;

but I should certainly be startled if I were also told, that besides being a grain of wheat it was also, by a mysterious compound of natures, the Planet Herschel, or the archangel Michael. And yet this does not amount by infinite degrees of self-contradiction to the assertion, that the same being is God and man; that one part of the nature is weary, and hungry, and thirsty, bowed down by every want and grief, while the other is resting in peace and blessedness—that in the same person there is one mind which is ignorant of that which is to come in a day, and another in which reside the secrets of the universe, of time, and of eternity.

The preacher, in speaking to Unitarians specially, commenced his address to us in a tone of exhortation, and closed it in that of rebuke. And what was the ground and subject of rebuke? Why, the smallness of our numbers. He exhorted us on our want of humility, of modesty, in opposing the whole Christian world. I wondered, if I were in a place of Protestant worship, or if I heard an advocate for the right of private judgment. My mind, as by a spell, was thrown back upon the early and infant history of Christianity; I saw the disciples going forth on that opposing world, of which their master had given them no enticing picture; I saw Peter at Antioch, and Paul harassed and toil-worn at Rome and Athens; I heard the cry of the vulgar, and the sarcasms of the philosophical, going forth in prolonged utterance in condemnation of the strange doctrine; I visioned before me the little knots of Christians, bound to each other in love, holding their own faith, despite of multitudes and despite of antiquity, fronting the world's scorn and the world's persecution. I thought of Luther, standing, as he confessed, against the world, an admission which was made one of the strongest arguments against him,—an argument that there are piles of divinity to maintain on the one side, and to repel on the other. I thought on the persecution of the Waldenses and the Albigenses; I saw them, few, and scattered, and

shivering, and dying, in their Alpine solitudes: for persecution, like the sun, enters into every nook. I thought of the early struggle of Protestantism in this country,—of Latimer, of Cranmer, and of Ridley; I thought of these honest and right-noble beings given, by a barbarous bigotry, to a death of infamy; delivered over to the fires of Smithfield; perishing amidst vulgar yells; not only abandoned, but condemned, by episcopal domination. I remembered having read, in the Life of Saint Francis Xavier, precisely similar objections made against him by the bonzas of Japan. I also considered how many societies at present send missionaries to the Heathen. I considered that, amidst the populousness of India, the Brahmins might make a similar objection with much greater force. Our fathers, they might say, never heard these things; our people repudiate them.

But notwithstanding such general objections, we do not withhold our admiration from Xavier and such self-denying men who were willing to spend and be spent so that they might make known the glory of Christ; we rejoice in seeing men thus forget their persons in love to their principles, and in Doctor Carey standing alone, preaching under a tree opposite to Juggernaut—we recognize with joy the impersonation of Christian sincerity and Christian philanthrophy. If numbers were the proof of truth, what changeful shapes might not truth assume to meet the humour of the multitude! And we hear the immortal Chillingworth—the first of logicians, the most charitable of polemics—thus replying to one of his assailants: "You obtrude upon us," says he, "that when Luther began, he being yet but one, opposed himself to all, as well subjects as superiors. If he did so in the cause of God it was heroically done of him. This had been without hyperbolizing, *Mundus contra Athanasium et Athanasius contra mundum.* Neither is it so impossible that the whole world should so far lie in wickedness (as St. John speaks,) that it may be lawful and noble for one man to oppose the world. But yet were

we put to our oaths, we should not surely testify any such thing for you; for how can we say properly that he opposed himself to all unless we could say also that all opposed themselves to him?" The same noble writer goes on to say "that though no man before him lifted up his voice as Luther did, yet who can assure us but that many before him both thought and spake in the lower voice of petitions and remonstrances in many points as he did?"—One fact at least must be conceded, and we are entitled to any advantage it implies, that it is more painful and self-sacrificing to be of the few than of the many, that there is far more to endure in being a little flock, than of the great multitude; and that in maintaining with all honesty our opinions in the face of the world's odium and the world's revilings, in despite of popular outcry and theological accusation, if no other virtues, we can surely claim those of sincerity and fortitude, of moral courage and moral consistency.

The preacher alluded to the ransom which Christ paid for sinners, and compared it to that which anciently was given in exchange for slaves. The question is, to whom were mankind slaves? To whom or what was the purchase-ransom to be paid? Was this slavery to sin, to Satan, or to God? Whosoever or whatsoever held the captive, must, of course, receive the price of redemption. To which of these was it due, and how holds the analogy? I leave the subject with the lecturer.

I now turn to what is greatly more agreeable in this discussion, the statement that we hold Christ to have been morally perfect. To this we assent with all our conscience, with all our hope, and with all our hearts. We regard him as pure and perfect in every thought and word. We see him with a holy piety illuminating his whole character and conduct. We see him, in solitude and society, holding communion with his Father and our Father, his God and our God. We see him in darkest moments, in periods of

deepest anguish, maintaining a hopeful and a trustful spirit; in every affliction holding true to his love for God and man. We see him with a patience that toiled for all, and never tired. We see him plodding through every thankless labour, which here can find no recompense, except it be that wherein the act itself is a blessing to the Spirit. We see him in vexation and sorrow; and, whilst we gaze upon his tranquil brow, we feel our stormy passions silenced into peace. We see him in his struggles and temptations, and we feel how poor and pitiful are our deepest griefs or sorest trials compared with his. We regard him in the greatness of his benevolence, and we hear from his lips such words as never man spake before. We behold him, whose soul was never tainted with sin, turn most mercifully on the repentant sinner, striking the heart with rending anguish, yet filling the eye with sweetest and most hopeful tears. We see him with a bosom throbbing with all human charities, and an ear open to every cry of woe and wretchedness. We see him in all unselfish sacrifices, and all generous labours; and regarding our nature in him as most lovely, most glorious, and most triumphant, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. We see him as the most perfect image of his Father; and the first, among all his brethren, filled with the inspiration of God, and spreading it forth abundantly on the souls of men.

Amongst other wrongs to Christ, we are accused of taking away all motives of love to him. It may be fair, then, to ask, for what do Trinitarians love him? And it may be also fair to ask, what is it in him that moves their affections which may not equally move ours? They cannot love Christ the God in the same sense or on the same grounds on which they love Christ the man. For what, then, do they love Christ the man, or Christ the mediator, for which, in that aspect, we may not love him as deeply and as truly? Is it for his many and great labours? On even the orthodox doctrine, these were the

toils of the manhood and not of the godhead. Is it for his sufferings? The God could not suffer, could not be weary, could not be persecuted, could not die, could neither be hooted nor crucified; if, therefore, all the strongest motives of love to Christ be founded in his humanity, then I assert we have all these motives. On any supposition, it was not the second person of the godhead that bent his bleeding head on Calvary, it was the *man* Christ Jesus. If it be said that Unitarian views do not move the heart, we have only with sorrow to confess, that no views of Christ's nature or character move us practically as they ought; and for the small results which his doctrines have produced amongst us, we, with others, have reason to bend down our heads in deepest humiliation: but we solemnly deny that our convictions about Christ have any tendency to produce such an effect. In the case of wrong, the fault is in ourselves, and not in our doctrines.

II. Having thus explained our views on Christ as a man, I shall occupy the remaining part of this discourse by stating, as briefly as I can, the difference between Trinitarians and ourselves on his character as a mediator.

What are the religious needs of man? says the Trinitarian. Consequently, What is the office of the Messiah? If we take the Calvinistic scheme, and at present that is the most popular, the reply would be, or should be, thus:—There is a decree of eternal election and reprobation by which millions, before the foundation of the world, were destined to be saved or lost. The numbers were fixed, and could neither be enlarged or diminished. For the salvation of the elect, and these only, the second person in the godhead became incarnate: them he purchased with his blood, and the rest were left to perish. The elect entered into life with the seal of predestination on their birth, redeemed, to be justified, to be sanctified, and finally to be glorified. *The remainder* came into the same life burdened with the imputation of a sin committed centuries previous to their existence. Forc-

doomed to perdition, overpassed by the Father, and disregarded by the Son, and unvisited by the Holy Spirit, they die in their sins, enter on their predetermined destiny, and, to use the tremendous language of the Athanasian Creed, "perish everlastingly."

In this statement, I do no wrong to Calvinism, and scarcely justice. It might easily be made more dark, and without a whit of controversial exaggeration. But if this be a true idea of Christianity, it is a system of terror and not of mercy, an anathema and not a blessing, the fiat of universal wrath and not the words of universal mercy, the proclamation from an austere and angry Deity and not a remedy for a weak and erring humanity. Orthodoxy in this scheme, instead of endearing Christ to the human heart, alienates and removes him from it; instead of making him an encouragement, renders him a terror; instead of placing him before us as the impersonation of almighty clemency, through him proclaims an almighty vindictiveness; places Jesus out of the sphere of human affections, and wrenches him from the worn and suffering heart of man. On the orthodox principle, he is out from us, and not of us. He is alone in his own mysterious nature. Our affections are perplexed, and our heads are bewildered. To offer our sympathy, or to look for his, would be the very climax of presumption. He is in no proper sense identified with us, or allied to us. His example is more an accident than an essential of his work. The substance of his work, on the orthodox scheme, might have taken place in the most secret recesses of the universe; and God would be satisfied, and the elect would be redeemed.*

What, says Unitarianism, are the moral wants of man? Consequently, what is the mediator he requires?

Religion, we maintain, was made for man, and not man for religion. The mediator, therefore, which we require, is one who would guide and not confound our nature; who

* See Note 2.

would ennoble but not perplex it. We would look for a mediator by whom we should receive the light and truth of God and heaven to our souls. We need to see the capacities, the duties, and the destinies of our kind, in one who is perfectly, but yet simply, of ourselves. Our sorrows, our sufferings, and our darkness, we regard as but so many reasons why our Redeemer and Saviour should be entirely of our own kind. We require one who would manifest to all that God is really interested in us. We require one who would show that we are not shut out from communion with the infinite, the invisible, and the future. We require one who would correct our evils, and yet resolve our doubts. We require one who could sympathize with our weakness. We require one who would show us of what our nature is capable, and thus flash upon us the guilt of our deficiencies, or inspire us with the hope of advancement. We are feeble, and need strength; we are tempted, and need support. Jesus proves to us that the strength is in us, if we use it; and that the support is at hand, if we choose to apply it. In our transgressions, we are but too much inclined to yield to, or justify ourselves with, a guilty sophistry; but our views of Jesus leave us no room for such delusion. Whilst Trinitarianism places most of our religious wants afar off and outside us, Unitarianism fixes them within us. Whilst Trinitarianism demands a Christ which shall reconcile God to us, Unitarianism holds a Christ which shall conform us to God: —to us his word and work is a spirit of life, his word and work to them but dogma or mystery.

Upon our views, Christ is properly a mediator; on those of orthodoxy, he can bear no such character: compounded of Deity and humanity, he is truly of neither. It is said that we have no need of Christ; that, in fact, he has no purpose in our system; that he might be taken from it without creating any loss. We maintain the contrary. We maintain that Christ is our all in all; that he is the impersonation

of our religion, that he is bodily our Christianity. Whilst others principally regard him in the retrospect, we have him as a present and a living reality. Whilst others trust him for what he has done, we love him for what he was. Whilst others make his nature the subject of hard and abstruse dogmas, we hold it forth as the subject of affectionate contemplation. Whilst others propose faith, we propose imitation as the greatest virtue. We look upon him as the Instructor in our moral doubts; the enlightener of our ignorance, which, in so many cases, press down our hearts respecting the general course of Providence and our future destiny; of our ignorance respecting God, and all that belongs to the future, the Past, and the Invisible.

The Past, yea, and the present also, is filled, we confess, with difficulties that alarm our fears, and call forth our sorrows. And it is only when we look to Christ as really and simply human that we have any tangible consolation, or any solid support. The trials or temptations or sufferings of a God are not only repugnant to our reasons, but foreign to our hearts. Such ideas can create no confidence, and therefore can afford no ground of sympathy—and no ground of hope, of strength, or of consolation. If one who is a God —were temptation to such a being possible—overcomes temptation, on what grounds can any other conclude he can resist it?—If one who is a God resists indignity with quietude and calmness, on what ground can another make such conduct an example?—If one who is a God meets agony and death with confident and fearless mind—knowing that his life is safe in eternal beatitude—on what possible principles of reason or expectation can this be a consolation or hope to feeble mortals?—If a God by his own inherent power rise from the dead, by what logic of faith or intellect are we to conclude *man* as *man* is to live for ever? It is only then upon our principles that I think he can properly fulfil the offices that pertain to his character as Me-

diator, that he can be our Teacher, that he can be our Exemplar, that he can be the Discloser of our duties and our destinies, that he can be at the same time a revealer and a revelation, that he can be the foundation of our hope and the source of our strength:—that he can, I say, be our Teacher; for what is necessary to the position of a moral instructor? not merely to be able to announce truth, but to announce it with living effect. The being who suffered no pain would have no power in preaching fortitude. Sympathy is necessary to confidence, and confidence is necessary to moral influence. Christ in his simple humanity has a power which we could not give to him, supposing he was of a compound constitution. Without this belief that he was simply and naturally man, his instructions have small effect, and his actions have no reality.—Moreover, I assert it is only in this view he can be our exemplar, I mean the ideal, or representative of what we ought to be, or of what in a more perfect condition we will be: for it is utterly and outrageously absurd to propose as the pattern of human conduct or human hopes, one who had in the same person the might and security of a Deity with the dangers and the trials of a man: and in truth it is outrageously absurd to say he could have such dangers and trials at all,—it would not be a mystery but a mockery:—and, lastly, I contend, that it is our views—weakly I have expressed them—which bring to the human spirit most of strength and most of comfort. They give consistency and sublimity to his communion with God, and to his revealings of another world. They give immeasurable value to his miracles. They put the seal of divine confirmation on his resurrection as the pledge of human immortality. He is then our Instructor in every doubt; our Consolation in every sorrow; our Strength in the griefs of life, and our Support in the fears of death. We see him in his own ennobling and sanctifying human nature, and by his impressive and vital energy sending out from him the power for its redemption.

The character of God, as revealed in Christ's teaching, and manifested by Christ's life, in the Unitarian faith, is not only discerned with a clearer light, but commands a more sacred reverence, as well as a more willing love. He that hath seen me, says the Saviour, hath seen the Father. Now we believe this expression to be full of profoundest truth, if we receive it as a moral revelation; but orthodoxy reduces it to a mystical enigma, and robs it of meaning and of value. We discern God through Christ as a Father, universal, merciful, good, holy, and all-powerful. This we collect from the teachings of Christ; we could never deduce it from the teachings of Calvinism. If we turn to the teachings of Christ, we hear of a Father impartial and unbounded; if we turn to the teachings of Calvinism, we read of a God that, in any benignant sense, is but father to a few, and these few purchased by the agonies of innocence; if we turn to the teachings of Christ, we are instructed of a Father who is merciful, and that mercy is proposed to us as the most perfect object of imitation; if we turn to the teachings of Calvinism, we are told of a Father who properly cannot be merciful at all, for the good he gives has been purchased, and is the equivalent of a price; a Father, I repeat, whose good-will is paid for; the primary element in whose character, as drawn in many popular creeds and formularies, is a stern wrath, falsely called justice; the imitation of which, in the creature, would turn earth into a darker hell than ever theology visioned. If we turn to the teachings of Christ, we find in them a Father supremely good, holding towards all his creatures a benignant aspect; who, when his children ask for bread will not give them a stone,—who casts with equal hand the shower and the sun-shine; who rules in the heavens with glory, and in earth with bounty; who hears the raven's cry as well as the Seraph's song. If we turn to Calvinism we are informed of a Deity who has seen the ruin and the wreck of his own workmanship, and pronounced a

curse over that which he did not choose to prevent; we are told that all creatures sicken under that original curse; that earth feels it to her centre; that it spreads a frown over heaven, and roars with a voice of destruction in the thunder and the tempest; that living creatures throughout all their countless tribes, suffer by it; that it pursues man from the first tears of infancy to the last pang of death. If we turn to the teachings of Jesus, we are taught that God is most holy; we are placed before that invisible Being who searches the heart, and sees it in its last recesses. Thus piercing to the very source of action, Christ makes guilt and holiness inward and personal, inflicts on the criminal the full penalty, and secures to rectitude its great reward: covering the one with moral hideousness, and the other with exceeding beauty. If we turn to the teachings of Calvinism, sin is contracted by imputation, and righteousness is acquired by imputation also. The lost endure the penalty of guilt in their own persons, the elect endure it by substitution, in the person of another. If we turn to the teachings of Jesus, we have a Father whose power is infinite as his goodness, in which we trust for the redemption and perfection of the universe. If we turn to the teachings of Calvinism, we see God consigning a vast portion of his rational creation to eternal sin and misery, and therefore, if we would save his benevolence we are constrained to sacrifice his power. Christ, Saint Paul declares, is the image of God; but if the Father be the avenger, and Christ the victim, he is not his image, but his contrast, and then our souls, instead of ascending to God in love, turn from him, and fix all their sympathies on Christ. As Unitarians apprehend him, we conceive him in perfect union with the Father, imaging, with resplendent sweetness, the attributes of his Father's character. In the compassion, in the benevolence, in the purity, and in the miracles of Christ, we have revealed to us the goodness, the holiness, and the power

of God; upon the calm and gracious countenance of Jesus we may read the glory of God, and, as in a stainless mirror, behold the scheme of his providence.

Place these views side by side with common experience and human feeling, and which, I ask, is the most consistent? Who, in a healthy state of mind, has any compunction because Adam sinned—but who, with his moral emotions awakened, is not anxious to know what is the duty of man here, and what his destiny hereafter? By which scheme, I inquire, are these momentous problems best resolved? Testing these views by the common experience to which I have appealed, taking its ordinary convictions as the standard, I may fairly inquire, whether our principles are not consistent in their hopes, and high and pure in their consolations? Comparing each with the history and life of Christ, I have no doubt of what would be the result, if system or dogmatism did not interfere with our convictions. Regarding Christ as our perfect, immortal, but human Brother, we have the living evidence that God is our Father, and Heaven is our Home.—Our views of Christ makes his history of most precious value to us—his life, his death, his crucifixion and his resurrection—Christ becomes to us the great interpreter of Providence, equally of its fears and hopes. He becomes to us the symbol of humanity, equally of its grief and glory—near his cross we weep over death, and at his tomb we rejoice in the certainty of life. In Christ crucified, we see our nature in its earthly humiliation; in Christ glorified, we behold it in its immortal triumph. As Jesus on the cross sets forth our sorrow, so Jesus from the tomb sets forth our hope. Identified with Jesus in the one, we are also identified with him in the other. We behold "the man," and in that man we behold the two solemn stages of our nature, the struggle of affliction and the glory of success.—We see the man of sorrow and the man of joy—the man of earth, and the man of heaven—the man of death and the man of immortality. We are made more

assured of that doctrine to which we fly in every painful turn of life—and in which we seek a deeper and kinder refuge as years and troubles gather over us. Without this persuasion we feel ourselves creatures weak and desolate; when our pleasures here have sunk, when our hopes here have long since died, how much would we, in this wilderness, desire to lay our heads, as Jacob did, on a cold stone, if like Jacob we beheld an opened heaven; but how much more sweetly may we look upon the risen and the living face of Jesus. He was of ourselves. He was identified with us. I see then in Jesus, not the illustration of an argument or of a theory. I see in him the embodiment of human goodness, human affections, and human hopes, and human capacities, and human destinies. When, especially, I think of human suffering, some necessary and some blameless,—when I behold the ignorant and the vicious, the ignorant and the wretched pining away in a crowded solitude,—when I see the man of weary years and many adversities, seeking at last but some spot in which to die,—when I see a sickened wretch, tired of existence, poor, indigent, cold and naked, the victim of almost every want and grief, toiling through life and shivering into death,—when I see laborious age, after few enjoyments of either soul or sense, lying at last on the bed where the weary are at rest, where at last the still small voice of Christ is more desired than all the logic of polemics,—when I see multitudes with dead, or dormant, or perverted energies —benevolent ardour wasted, or most honourable philanthropy defeated,—when I consider the thousands, and the tens of thousands of human beings chained to a dark fatality in the destiny of moral and physical circumstances—the ignorance, the bondage, the cruelties, the unrevealed wretchedness without a name heaped on the heads of myriads, generation after generation,—when I think of unspeaking and unspeakable agonies lurking in every corner of civilized society—hereditary penury, unavoidable ruin, unforeseen

misfortune, the pangs of noble minds struggling in vain against dependence; the writhings of dying hearts, concealing their last sighs from watching friends, the stifled laments of honest virtue cast forth on over-grown cities and populations, where sufferer after sufferer sink unheard in the noise of indifferent millions,—when I remember unrewarded toil, fine spirits crushed, and fair names blighted,—when I see the enjoyment of the worthless and the prosperity of the vicious, the success of the worst passions, and the basest plans, the triumph of wickedness over truth and virtue,—when I reflect seriously and solemnly on the strange sights which this world has seen—the persecutor on the throne and the martyr at the stake, the patriot on the scaffold and the tyrant on the bench—the honest man ruined, and the villain the gainer,—I have before me, I admit, a dark and startling problem. In the dying Christ I have the difficulties: in the risen Christ I have their solution. In Christ on the cross I see our crucified humanity—in Christ risen and ascending I see the same humanity glorified; at the cross of Jesus my heart would sink, but at his empty grave my hope is settled and my soul at ease. I go to that vacant tomb, and there I am shown that the bands of death are loosed, and the gates of glory are lifted up. Near Jesus on the cross, I have but thick clouds and darkness; in Jesus risen the shadows are melted, and the gloom is lost in brightness, and the sun which burst it shines forth more resplendent—the blackness of the sky breaks forth into light, and the wrath of the ocean softens into peace, the curtain of mist is folded up, and a lovely world bursts upon my gaze. When I stand at the cross I have man imaged in fears, in struggles and in death. I have around me our nature in its crimes and passions; but when I see the ascending and glorified Christ, I behold humanity in its most triumphant hopes:—When I stand over the silent tomb of Jesus, and would weep, as if all beneath and beyond the skies were hopeless, a light

shines out from the darkness, and throws a halo of peace about the desponding soul. In Christ crucified, believing him human, simply human, I feel around me the right of man—in Christ risen, believing him also human, I exult in unclouded and unsetting light:—near Christ crucified, I tremble with exceeding fear; near Christ glorified, I am comforted with exceeding joy—and in each case because I feel he is truly and simply human.

In both parts of his life and history we have opposing aspects of Providence. But if in his sufferings we have the pillar of cloud, in his glory we have the pillar of fire; and in this wilderness pilgrimage we are saddened and solemnized by the one,—enlightened and guided by the other. Christ crucified and Christ glorified, united in our faith and feelings, identified with our nature, our history, and our race, opens views to the Christian's soul, not only of consolation but of triumph, that defy expression. It pours light and hope and dignity on universal destiny and on every individual condition. In analogy with God's material creation in its workings, it shows glory arising out of humiliation, and renovated beauty from apparent destruction—it shows in man as in nature—the world of grandeur, of purity, and of softness—born in the throes of chaotic formation; the streams of spring filled with the year's rejoicing gushing out of the frozen fountains of winter; the fresh, and bright, and peaceful morning generated in the midnight storm. If these views of Christ are seated in our hearts and faith: if we truly identify ourselves with one as with the other: feeling that in each case Christ is simply and perfectly our brother,—what can deaden our hope, and what can sever us from duty? Though friends be absent and enemies be fierce, and pain wreck our frames and poverty lay bare our dwellings, and disappointment wait on our struggles, and grief thicken heavily on our souls, in Christ suffering there is our worst extremity; in Christ glorified there is that worst extremity redeemed

into the fulness of salvation; in Christ we see personified our entire humanity, except its sins; in him we behold its subjection and its triumph. View its pains in his humiliation, and its future prospects in his victory, and what a glory does it not spread upon our race? Is there a single track of the past on which it does not rain showers of light—on which it does not leave the persuasion of immortal and universal existence? By Christ's doctrines and his life we are led to the conclusion that no human existence has been ever spent in vain; that of all the vast ocean of intelligent beings with which generations have flooded the earth; that in that vast universe of life, one heart has never panted without a purpose; that no thought ever started into being, not a throb of misery, not a solitary charity, not a silent prayer, not an honest effort, not a fervent wish or desire, not a single good intention, not a single instance of sacrifice or worth, ever existed to be destroyed, but that on the contrary they have been transferred to more genial scenes in another world, and left seeds for better fruits in this. Believing on Christ the crucified and the glorified, and still regarding him as the image of God, it is pleasant to dwell equally upon the past and upon the future; to think of the good and true who suffered here for virtue, collected hereafter in all the unity of peace, having escaped the fightings of earth, settled in the joys of heaven. But why confine ourselves to the excellent and the great? The glory of Christ proclaims life to all; it attracts to itself whosoever lived or suffered on earth, all that ever will live or suffer. Into what a glory has Christ then not entered: go to the most seclusive church-yard: worlds there moulder in the smallest space; within its range as many sleep as might have peopled an empire, and in a few steps we may walk over millions. Beneath those pacings what parents and children, and companions, have mouldered? What friendships, and hopes, and energies have melted in this simple dust?

But why say a Church-yard? All earth is a grave. The world is sown with bodies: is futurity as filled with souls? Is this spot on which we breathe for a moment a mere speck between two eternities of infinite nothingness? Have the generations as they vanished, sunk into eternal sleep, so that *"It is finished,"* should be the proper epitaph of all departed humanity? Christ alone gives the full solution of this awful problem; and this solution is clear and consolatory, as we feel him to be of ourselves. He is thus the great type of our death and of our life, throwing light over the grave, and opening to our faith a growing and everlasting future,—where all exist, the great and good to more perfect, and the evil to be redeemed,—and where every stream that flows on to eternity will bear along with it a fresh burden of joy and beauty. Jesus the crucified, and Jesus the glorified, of simple but holy humanity, is the great interpreter of the past and the future, and by him interpreted, how glorious are the words, all our memories on earth and our hopes in heaven.

APPENDIX.

I THINK it right to state here that one or two passages are printed in the lecture, which, as time was failing, I passed over in the delivery. They affect in nowise the general import or argument. I thought it possible that one sentence in reference to Mr. Jones's lecture would require to be expunged; but having now read the lecture in print, I see the sentence may stand. Mr. Jones defined with clearness and accuracy his belief in Christ's humanity—that Christ was really a man, "that he had a corporeal and mental existence like our own," "that he possessed a body of flesh and blood, such as is common to our race," "that in that body dwelt a rational soul, to whose volitions it was subject," "that he was conceived in the womb, and born a helpless infant, and dependent on the care of his parents through the whole of his childhood and youth."* Here, then, we have a set of qualities in the man Christ Jesus, which from their very nature must have commenced with his earthly life. Thus defined, the lecturer afterwards goes on to say that "though there was nothing in his corporeal or mental powers essentially different from other men, yet were *there certain peculiarities* connected with his *perfect manhood*, which it is of momentous consequence that we should know and believe."† "First, he possessed *moral perfection*." On this all Unitarians are agreed. Secondly, the lecturer noticed the *miraculous conception*. On this we have differences amongst us. Now *a third* peculiarity was also marked, which by the order of the lecturer's argument we are entitled to rank with the others as belonging to the manhood of Christ. Mr. Jones is still speaking of *the man* Christ Jesus, and yet the *third peculiarity* is alleged to be *his pre-existence*. But if to have been born of a woman, if to have had a corporeal and mental existence like our own, were essentials of his humanity, then this is a flat contradiction; if this attribute were meant to apply to him as God, we should have been told

* Lect. pp. 219, 220. † Lect. p. 222.

so; and even then, the distinction would be wholly powerless, for no one thinks of comparing other men with Jesus as God. Mr. Jones does not introduce that portion of his subject until we have passed over several pages.* The analogy of body and soul in man is incessantly used to illustrate a two-fold nature in Christ. Nothing can be more fallacious. It breaks down at every step; for if it be used to signify the possible union of two different elements in one being, then Christ is not two-fold but three-fold, there are in his person the divine soul and the human soul, and in addition to all, the human body. If it be used to signify the union of two natures in one person, the soul and body are not two distinct natures, in the sense required, and therefore can neither illustrate nor prove the dogmatical complexity ascribed to Christ. Every nature that we know is composite, but it is one thing to be compounded of various qualities, and another to be a union of irreconcileable ones. If man had *two* souls in one body, so perfectly united as to make a single person, and yet that one should be ignorant of what the other knew, then we should have an illustration that would be correct and intelligible. Mr. Jones uses the following illustration, to shew that we distinguish between the body and the soul when we do not express the distinction in words. "If we say," he observes, "that a neighbour is sick, or in pain, or hungry, or thirsty, or in want, we mean that his *body* is sick, or in pain, or hungry, or thirsty, or in want, and no one for a moment supposes that we refer to his soul. And if, on the other hand, we say that a man is learned, or ignorant, wise or unwise, happy or miserable, humble or proud, it is equally obvious that we refer to the *soul*, and not to the *body*."† No such distinction is known either in grammar or philosophy, and the laws of thought as well as those of language equally repudiate it. A man may be healthy or sick by *means* of the excellence or defect of his body, but the assertion is made of the man as a *person*. He may in like manner be wise or ignorant by *means* of the excellence or defects of the faculties of his soul; but again, the assertion is of *the person*. And, indeed, if we were to speak with severe and metaphysical precision, every instance which the preacher has adduced should be predicated of the Soul, for so far as they are sensations, they belong properly to the soul; and the body is but their medium or instrument. By the laws, then, both of thought and language, whatever Christ affirms of himself, he affirms

* Lecture, p. 233. † Lecture, p. 244.

of his *person*, be the elements what they may that enter into its constitution. But how are we to think of the dogma for which such hair-splitting distinctions are adduced; distinctions which, had not the solemnity of the subject forbidden the use of ridicule, might be shown by all forms of speech to be as incongruous as they are puerile, and as ridiculous as they are false.

Note on John xii. See page 8.

On the supposition of our Lord's simple humanity, this chapter exhibits a most sublime revelation of his nature. On any other hypothesis it loses all its moral beauty, and leaves us nothing but inconsistency. The belief of his simple human nature gives a more sacred awe to the circumstances in which he was placed, explains to us those struggles and workings of his inmost soul, which were deepening the bitterness of his hour of travail. We can then appreciate the grandeur with which, in the spirit of duty, he arose to meet the approaching storm; and we can also appreciate the tenderness and sensibility with which he shrunk for a moment from the anguish that awaited him. To say that the godhead withdrew its support from him is a solution unintelligible in any sense. For through every moment of his existence he must have been conscious of his proper Deity, or he was not; if he was, why tremble? if not, then during that period his godhead was virtually extinguished, and he remained simply man. But every utterance of his in this profound chapter is truly human,—breathings of that nature from its inmost recesse, strong in duty, but struggling with fear and grief.

There is no period of our Lord's mission in which we see so profound a solemnity around him. He had come from the quiet and hospitable home of his friends in Bethany, had made his public and triumphant entry into Jerusalem, but the awful close and consummation was at hand; he knew that these hosannahs would scarcely have died on the ear, before their change into hootings and revilings; and the hands which spread the palm were ready to drag him to the cross. The next day was big with sorrows and tortures. The mysteries of death and the grave were to be resolved; and it is no dishonour to our Lord to suppose such a prospect should fill his heart with trouble; for the most finely constituted nature is ever the most sensitive, and those who perceive clearly and vividly, apprehend circumstances which it never enters into coarser minds to discern. In proportion as our personal sensations are acute, is the victory of duty

noble that overcomes them, in the same proportion also is the strength of submission, or the beauty of patience. With these views, we can well interpret for our consolation and example the anguished exclamation of Christ,—"Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I to this hour."

If Christ were God as well as man, words like these are absolutely unaccountable; and as we cannot be so profane as to think that Christ spoke for mere effect, we have only to conclude that it was the fervent and simple exclamation of a being who felt he needed help from Heaven. This were impiety of the darkest die, if Jesus in one portion of his own person was infinite and omnipotent.

NOTE 1, see page 18.

"Priestley, loaded with glory, was modest enough to be astonished at his good fortune, and at the multitude of beautiful facts which nature seemed to reveal to him alone. He forgot that her favours were not gratuitous, and that if she had so well explained herself, it was because he had known how to constrain her by his indefatigable perseverance in questioning her, and by a thousand ingenious means of wresting from her her answers. Others carefully conceal what they owe to accident. Priestley seemed to wish to ascribe to it all his merit. He records, with unexampled candour, how many times he had profited by it without knowing it, how many times he was in possession of new substances without having perceived them; and he never concealed the erroneous views which sometimes directed his efforts, and which he renounced only from experience. These confessions did honour to his modesty, without disarming jealousy. Those whose views and methods had never led them to discovery, called him a mere maker of experiments, without method, and without an object:—"It is not astonishing," they added, "that among so many trials and combinations he should find some that were successful. But real natural Philosophers were not duped by these selfish criticisms."—After some remarks on Priestley's changes in religious opinions, and tracing rapidly his progress from fiercest Calvinism to simple humanitarianism, he thus beautifully describes the close of his laborious life:—"His last moments were full of those feelings of piety which animated his whole life, and the improper controul of which had been the foundation of all his errors. He caused the gospel to be read to him, and thanked God for having allowed him to lead an useful life, and granted him

a peaceful death. Among the list of the principal blessings, he ranked that of having personally known almost all his contemporaries. 'I am going to sleep as you do,' said he to his grand-children, who were brought to him, 'but we shall wake again together, and, I hope, to eternal happiness;' thus evincing in what belief he died. These were his last words. Such was the end of that man, whom his enemies accused of wishing to overthrow all morality and religion, and yet whose greatest error was to mistake his vocation, and to attach too much importance to his individual sentiments in matters when the most important of all feelings ought to be the love of peace."*

The Edinburgh Review, † from which this extract is taken, introduces it with the following liberal and generous remarks:—

"We cannot pass unnoticed the *Eloge* of Dr. Priestley, which brought his biographer into the field of theological discussion, and which deserves to be studied in a country where the Character of that extraordinary man, both as a Philosopher and a Christian, has been so greatly misrepresented.

The conclusion of the following extract is earnestly recommended to the consideration of those pious men who have been misled by the intolerant spirit of the day; and who, on lending their aid, without being conscious of what they are doing, to break the cords of affection which ought to unite the professors of our common Christianity.

NOTE 2, see page 26.

A great mass of the religious world, in the orthodox meaning of that phrase, is now called *evangelical*, and although that term, I admit, does not necessarily imply absolute Calvinism, yet, in point of fact, the greater number of those whom it designates are Calvinists. The opponents of Calvinism are often accused of misrepresenting it. For this reason I have endeavoured here to make it speak for itself—by some of its principal formularies, by one or two of its popular writers, and by the author of it himself, in his own words,—Many will say *they* hold no such sentiments: for the sake of human nature I sincerely believe them; if I thought such a faith (the terms being understood) could be extensively entertained, confidence in my species would be turned into fear. But, notwithstanding, many opinions which they do hold, logically pursued, lead directly to the conclusions contained

* Cuvier's Eloge on Priestley. † No. 126, 1836.

in the extracts, the writers of which were perfectly consistent with their system. Numbers who are called Calvinists, I am aware, not only do not believe its worst doctrines, but do not understand them. In the statement, however, of opinions, we cannot be guided by individual feelings, except in cases where we have individual protest to the contrary. The members of the Church of England may object to the Westminster confession of Faith, not being a formulary of their Church: it is, however, the sworn authority of a large body of clergy with whom, when purpose needs, they refuse not to hold friendly communion. It is, however, an accurate digest of Calvinism: in that relation I have used it,—to such of the English clergy as are not Calvinists it can have no reference. I wish to quote it as a theological, and not as an ecclesical authority. But the seventeenth article of the English Church, though softened in expression, is the same in sense. Burnet I know has made the unsuccessful effort to suit it to both sides for the sake of tender consciences; but that must be a most convenient and comprehensive latitude of phraseology which can sound all the notes of the theological scale, from high Calvinism down to low Arminianism. That the meaning of the article is properly Calvinistic, is plain from the times in which it was composed, from the opinions of the men who drew it up, and from the terms in which it is expressed. Yet many thousand ministers with all varieties and shades of opinions, solemnly affirm they believe it, although the law demands that the articles shall be taken in their plain and grammatical sense. This is one proof of the consistency of creeds. I quote one author, Boston, who seems actually to feast and luxuriate amidst the dark monstrocities which he pictures; his spirit appears to bound, and his heart to exult within him, at the sound of the dreadful trumpet which calls the wicked to their final doom; and one can almost imagine the rapture of his eye, as in fancy he saw the flame kindling, and the smoke of torment arising in which they were to burn for ever. In his description of hell he displays no ordinary degree of graphic and geographical talent, and when he comes to paint the sufferings of damned bodies, he is so accurate and anatomical, that as Paley at 60 learned anatomy, to write on natural theology, you would suppose that Boston learned it to enlarge with correctness on the physical tortures of the lost. I wish not to fix his opinions upon any man or body of men; substantially, however, they are no more than Calvinism, though some might object to his mode of expressing them. This I may fairly say to any of those who do

not agree with Boston in their Calvinism, and would yet fix the Improved Version on us, that *they* are as bound to receive the one as *we* the other. Nay, more so, inasmuch as Boston's work is in a wider circulation, and with the evidence of most extensive approval. It is published by the London Tract Society, and I have an edition before me as late as 1838; it is sold by every evangelical bookseller, and it is to be found on the shelves of every evangelical circulating library. We are accused of rebellion against God and Christ; but let any one read dispassionately the extracts contained in this, and reflect on the sentiments to be deduced from their collective testimony, and then let him say whether deeper injury was ever done to God, or Christ, or man, than is inflicted by these repulsive dogmas. By these descriptions, if God is a being of love or justice, then language has no meaning, or we are to interpret the terms by their contradictories. If you were only to disguise the words, but preserve the sentiments, and attribute the character implied in them to the parent of the most zealous of Calvinists, he would spurn the aspersion with honest indignation. And, if we mean not by goodness in God, something analogous to goodness in man, what is it that we can mean? The abstractions in which these dogmas are involved by scholastic mysticism, blinds the mind to their ordinary import. But let us suppose an illustration. Take the case of a human father, who, granting he had the power, should pre-ordain his child to misery; should attribute a guilt to him, he never knew; should require from him what he had no power to accomplish, and condemn him because he had not fulfilled it; should place him in circumstances in which he was sure to grow worse, and yet withhold the help that could make him better; should, as the son sunk deeper in iniquity, heap heavier malediction on the wretch he abandoned; should see without pity the ruin that continually grew darker, and gaze ruthlessly on the suffering that was finally to be consummated in despair. —Suppose further, and you render the picture complete, that such conduct was defined as the vindication of parental dignity, the very glory of justice; and he who practised it as a father of exceeding love. But we will go further, and suppose this father has the power to cast his child into misery everlasting, and that he does it; must we close the analogy here? No: we can carry it one step higher: swell out this being into infinite existence, make him omnipotent and omniscient, place him on the throne of the universe, and put all creatures within his boundless control, he is then the God of Calvin's

theology. This view I give not rashly, nor without foundation; it is more than justified by the quotations that I bring forward. *Our* faith is characterized as a blasphemous heresy: we employ no epithet, but we are not afraid to have it contrasted with Calvinistic orthodoxy.

Character of God.

"Predestination is the everlasting purpose of God; whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) he hath constantly decreed by his counsel, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour."—*From the 17th Article of the Church of England.*

"By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestined and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished."

"The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will; whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice."

"As for those wicked and ungodly men whom God, as a righteous judge, for former sins doth blind and harden, from them he not only withholdeth his grace, whereby they might have been enlightened in their understandings, and wrought upon in their hearts, but sometimes also withdraweth the gifts which they had, and exposeth them to such objects as their conception makes occasion of sin; and withal, gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan; whereby it cometh to pass, that they harden themselves, even under those means which God useth for the softening of others."—*Westminster Confession of Faith*, ch. iii, § 3, 4, 7; ch. v, § 6.

"God, in his providence, permitted some angels wilfully and irrecoverably to fall into sin and damnation, limiting and ordering that and all their sins to his own glory; and established the rest in holiness and happiness, employing them all, at his pleasure, in the administrations of his power, wisdom, and justice."—*Larger Catechism*, q. 19.

"I grant, indeed," says Calvin, "that all the children of Adam fell, by the *will* of God, into that misery of state whereby they be now bound; and this is it that I said at the beginning, that at length we must alway return to the determination of the will of God, the cause whereof is hidden in himself. The angels which stood fast in their uprightness, Paul calleth the elect. If their steadfastness was grounded on the good pleasure of God, the falling away of the others proveth that they were forsaken; of which thing there can be no other cause alleged than reprobation, which is hidden in the secret counsel of God."—*Inst.* note, b. iii, ch. 23, § 4.

"Predestination, whereby God adopteth some into the hope of life, and adjudgeth some to eternal death, no man, that would be accounted godly, dare deny." "Predestination we call the eternal decree of God: he had it determined with himself what he willed to become of every man. For all are not created to like estate; but to some eternal life, and to some eternal damnation, is fore-appointed. Therefore every man is created to one or the other end. So we say he is predestinated to life or to death."—*Ibid.* b. iii, ch. 21, § 5.

"The Scripture crieth out that all men were in the person of one man made bound to eternal death. Since this cannot be imputed to nature, it is plain it proceeded from the wondrous counsel of God. But it is too much absurdity that these, the good patrons of the righteousness of God, do so stumble at a straw and leap over beams. Again I ask, how came it that the fall of Adam did wrap up in eternal death so many nations, with their children, being infants, without remedy, but because it so pleased God? Here their tongues, which are otherwise so prattling, must be dumb. It is a terrible decree, I grant; yet no man shall be able to deny but that God foreknew what end man should have ere he created him, and therefore foreknew because he had so ordained by his decree."—*Ibid.* b. iii, ch. 23, § 7.

These quotations, did space permit, or the patience of my readers, might be multiplied to a much greater extent; and might do something, perhaps, to illustrate the character of the persecutor of Servetus. His actions, as a man, were not inconsistent with his ideas of God as a theologian.

"Who can fully describe," asks Boston, "the wrath of an angry God? None can do it." "Wrath," he says, "is a fire in the affections of man, tormenting the man himself; but there is no perturbation in God. His wrath does not in the least mar that infinite repose which he hath in himself." Then, speaking of man generally,

he says, "There is a wrath in the heart of God against him; there is a wrath in the word of God against him; there is a wrath in the hand of God against him." We have here his statement of wrath in God as an agent; and, through pages of gloomiest description, he makes man its unsheltered object. "There is a wrath on his body. It is a piece of accursed clay, which wrath is sinking into, by virtue of the first covenant. There is a wrath on the natural man's enjoyments. Wrath is on all he has: on the bread he eats, the liquor he drinks, and the clothes he wears."—*Boston's Fourfold State.*

Character and Condition of Man.

"With such bondage of sin then as will is detained, it *cannot* move itself to goodness, much less apply itself."—*Calvin Inst.*, b. ii, ch. 3, § 5, London Edition, 634.

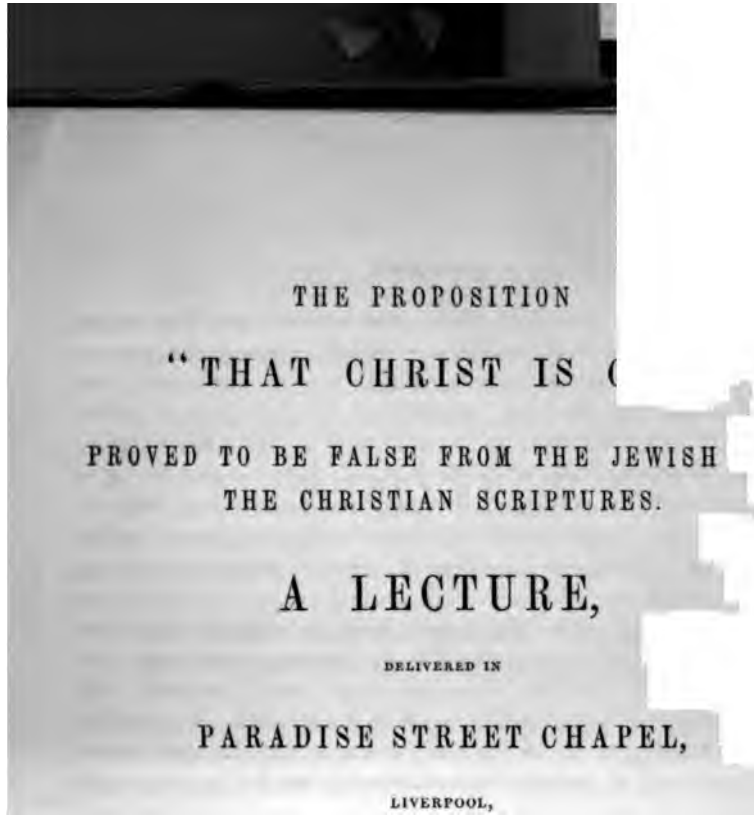
"Works done by unregenerate men, although for the matter of them they may be things which God commands, and of good use both to themselves and others, yet because they proceed not from a heart purified by faith, nor are done in a right manner, according to the word, nor to a right end, the glory of God, they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, or make a man meet to receive grace from God: and yet their neglect of them is more sinful and displeasing unto God."—*Westminster Confession of Faith*, ch. xvi. § 7.

"Man in his depraved state is under an utter inability to do anything truly good."—*Boston.*

The same doctrine is taught more leniently in the 13th article of the Church of England, so that amongst the theologians, "the natural man," as they call him, is in a sad condition, for act as he will he cannot but sin: if he does good works, he commits sin, and if he neglects them he is guilty of still greater sins. Quotations in the spirit of those already adduced might be swelled into volumes from the vast treasures of Calvinistic divinity. But I shall close these by an extract from the author I have before mentioned and quoted from, an author, as I have said, highly popular and largely circulated; and here is a passage of his on Christ and the last judgment.—"The judge will pronounce the sentence of damnation on the ungodly multitude. Then shall he say also to them on the left hand, 'Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:' . . . . . The Lamb of God shall roar as a lion against them; he shall excommunicate and cast them out of his presence for ever, by a sentence from the throne, saying, 'Depart from

me, ye cursed.' He shall adjudge them to everlasting fire, and to the society of devils for evermore. And this sentence also we suppose, will be pronounced with an audible voice by the man Christ. And all the saints shall cry, 'Hallelujah! true and righteous are his judgments!' None were so compassionate as the saints when on earth, during the time of God's patience: but now that time is at an end; their compassion for the ungodly is swallowed up in joy in the Mediator's glory, and his executing of just judgment, by which his enemies are made his footstool. Though when on earth the righteous man wept in secret places for their pride, and because they would not hear, yet he shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance; he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked (Ps. lviii. 10). No pity shall then be shown them from their nearest relations. The godly wife shall applaud the justice of the judge in the condemnation of her ungodly husband: the godly husband shall say *Amen* to the condemnation of *her* who lay in his bosom; the godly parent shall say *Hallelujah* at the passing of the sentence against their ungodly child; and the godly child shall, from the bottom of his heart, approve the condemnation of his wicked parents,—the father who begat him, and the mother who bore him. The sentence is just, they are judged according to their work."—Rev. xx. 12.

It were surely preferable to labour under the blindest mistakes concerning the essence of God, or the person of Christ, than be guilty of believing such atrocious representations as these of their moral character. The zealous may scout us if they choose, as infidels; but if Calvinism and Christianity were identical, infidelity would be virtue, it would be but the righteous rebellion of human nature against creeds, in vindication of the truth of its own affections, and the rectitude of its God.



ON TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 1839.

BY

REV. JAMES MARTINEAU.

BEING THE FIFTH OF A SERIES, TO BE DELIVERED WEEKLY, IN ANSWER TO A COURSE OF LECTURES AGAINST UNITARIANISM, IN CHRIST CHURCH, LIVERPOOL, BY THIRTEEN CLERGYMEN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

LIVERPOOL:
WILLMER AND SMITH, 32, CHURCH STREET.
LONDON:
JOHN GREEN, 121, NEWGATE STREET.

1839.

WILLMER AND SMITH,
32, CHURCH STREET, LIVERPOOL.

LECTURE V.

THE PROPOSITION "THAT CHRIST IS GOD," [illegible] FROM THE JEWISH AND THE CHRISTIAN [illegible]

BY REV. JAMES MARTINEAU.

"FOR THOUGH THERE BE THAT ARE CALLED GODS, WHETHER IN HEAVEN OR IN EARTH (AS THERE BE GODS MANY, AND LORDS MANY), BUT TO US THERE IS BUT ONE GOD, *THE FATHER*, OF WHOM ARE ALL THINGS, AND WE IN HIM; AND ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST, BY WHOM ARE ALL THINGS, AND WE BY HIM."—1 *Cor.* viii. 5, 6.

SCARCELY had Christ retired from our world, before his influence began to be felt by mankind in two different ways. He transformed their *Worship*, and purified their interpretation of *Duty*. They have ever since adored a holier God, and obeyed a more exalted rule of right. Looking upward, they have discerned in heaven a Providence more true and tender than they had believed; looking around, they have seen on earth a service allotted to their conscience, nobler and more responsible than they had thought before. Watched from above by an object of infinite trust and veneration, they have found below a work of life most sacred, to be performed by obedient wills beneath his sight. Faith has flown to its rest *there*, and conscience has toiled in its task *here*, with a tranquil energy never seen in a world not yet evangelized.

To suppose that a set of moral precepts, however wise and

authoritative, could ever have produced, in either of these respects, the effects which have flowed from Christianity, seems to me altogether unreasonable. Had Christ done no more than leave in the world a sound code of ethics, his work would probably have expired in a few centuries, and have been very imperfect while it endured. A few prudential and dispassionate minds would have profited by its excellence; but never would it have trained the affections of childhood, or overawed the energy of guilt, or refined the rugged heart of ignorance, or consecrated the vigils of grief.

The power of Christ's religion is not in his precepts, but in his person; not in the memory of his maxims, but in the image of Himself. He is his own system; and, apart from him, his teachings do but take their place with the sublimest efforts of speculation, to be admired and forgotten with the colloquies of Socrates, and the meditations of Plato. Himself first, and his lessons afterwards, have the hearts of the people ever loved: his doctrines, indeed, have been obscured, his sayings perverted, his commands neglected, the distinctive features of his instructions obliterated, but he himself has been venerated still; his unmistakeable spirit has corrected the ill-construed letter of the Gospel; and preserved some unity of life amid the various, and even opposing developments of Christian civilization.

The person of Christ may be contemplated as an object of religious reverence, or as an object of moral imitation. He may appear to our minds as the representative of Deity, or as the model of humanity; teaching us, in the one case, what we should believe, and trust, and adore in heaven; in the other, what we should do on earth:—the rule of faith in the one relation, the rule of life in the other.

Did his office extend only to the latter, were he simply an example to us, displaying to us merely what manhood ought to be, he might indeed constitute the centre of our morality; but he would not properly belong to our religion: he would

be the object of affections equal and social, t
would take a place among things human, not divin
be the symbol of visible and definite duties, no
and everlasting realities. A Christianity whic
him to this relation, would indeed be a step removed
the mere cold preceptive system, which depresses
law-giver; but it would no more be entitled to th
religion, than the Ethics of Aristotle, or the
Cicero.

It is then as the type of God, the human im
everlasting Mind, that Christ becomes an object
Once did a dark and doubting world cry, like p
evening of Gethsemane, "Show us the Father, and it
ceth us:" but now has Christ "been so long with us" that we, "who have seen him, have seen the Father." This I conceive to have been the peculiar office of Jesus; to *show us*, not to *tell us*, the spirit of that Being who spreads round us in Infinitude, and leads us through Eternity. The universe had prepared before us the *scale* of Deity; Christ has filled it with his own *spirit*; and we worship now, not the cold intellectual deity of natural religion; not the distant majesty, the bleak immensity, the mechanical omnipotence, the immutable stillness, of the speculative Theist's God: but One far nearer to our worn and wearied hearts; One whose likeness is seen in Jesus of Nazareth, and whose portraiture, suffused with the tints of that soul, is impressed upon creation; One, therefore, who concerns himself with our humblest humanities, and views our world with a domestic eye, whose sanctity pierces the guilty mind with repentance, and then shelters the penitent from rebuke; who hath mercy for the victims of infirmity, and a recall for the sleepers in the grave. Let Messiah's mind pass forth to fill all time and space; and you behold the Father, to whom we render a loving worship.

In order to fulfil this office of revealing, in his own per-

son, the character of the Father, Christ possessed and manifested all the *moral* attributes of Deity. His absolute holiness; his ineffable perceptions of right; his majestic rebuke of sin; his profound insight into the corrupt core of worldly and hypocritical natures, and to the central point of life in the affectionate and genuine soul; his well-proportioned mercies and disinterested love, fill the whole meaning of the word Divine: God can have no other, and no more, perfection of character intelligible to us.

These moral attributes of God, we conceive to have been compressed, in Christ, within the physical and intellectual limits of humanity; to have been unfolded and displayed amid the infirmities of a suffering and tempted nature; and, during the brevity of a mortal life, swiftly hurried to its close. And this immersion of divine perfection in the darkness of weakness and sorrow, so far from forfeiting our appreciation of him, incalculably deepens it. The addition of infinite force, mechanical or mental, would contribute no new ingredient to our veneration, since force is not an object of reverence; and it would take away the wonder and grandeur of his soul, by rendering temptation impossible, and conflict a pretence. Since God cannot be pious, or submissive to his own providence, or cast down in doubt of his own future, or agonized by the insults of his own creatures, such a combination seems to confuse and destroy all the grounds of veneration, and to cause the perfection of Christ to pass in unreality away.

To this view, however, of the person of Christ, Trinitarians object as defective; and proceed to add one other ingredient to the conception, *viz.*, that he possessed the physical and intellectual attributes of Deity;—that he is to be esteemed no less eternal, omnipotent and omnipresent, than the Infinite Father; the actual creator of the visible universe, of the very world into which he was born and of the mother who bare him, of the disciples who followed and of the enemies

who destroyed him. These essential properties of Deity by no means, we are assured, interfered with the completeness of his humanity; so that he had the body, the soul, the consciousness, of a man; and, in union with these, the infinite mind of God. But in a question of mere words, in which the guidance of ideas is altogether lost, I dare not trust myself to my own language. To disturb the juxta-position of charmed sounds, is to endanger orthodoxy; and, in describing the true doctrine, I therefore present you with a portion of that unexampled congeries of luminous phrases, commonly called the Athanasian Creed. "The Catholic faith is this: that we worship One God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one; the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost: . . . the Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal; and yet they are not three eternals, but one eternal. . . . So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and yet they are not three Gods, but one God. . . . So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts. And, in this Trinity, none is afore or after other; none is greater or less than another: but the whole three persons are co-eternal together and co-equal."

Of the second of these three persons, the second article of the Church of England gives the following account:—

"The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, and of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, of her substance; so that two whole and perfect natures,—that is to say, the Godhead and the Manhood,—were joined together in one Person, never to

be divided; whereof is One Christ, very God and very Man; who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us."

In opposition to this theory, we maintain the Personal Unity of God, and the simplicity of nature in Christ. It is my duty at present to submit these contrasted schemes to the test of Scripture. In order to effect this, I advance these three positions:

(1.) That if the Athanasian doctrine be found in Scripture, then, on our opponents' own principles, Scripture does not contain a revelation from God.

(2.) That if it be really in the Bible, certain definable traces of it there may justly be demanded; and, before opening the record, we should settle what these traces must be.

(3.) That such traces cannot be found in Scripture.

I. "If," says Bishop Butler, "a supposed revelation contain clear immoralities or contradictions, either of these would prove it false."* This principle, generally recognized by competent reasoners, has been distinctly admitted in the present discussion; and Dr. Tattershall, in particular, has employed much ingenuity to prove that the doctrine of the Trinity, containing no absurdity or contradiction, involves in no danger the authority of the writings supposed to teach it. But no subtlety can avail to remove the inherent incredibility of this tenet, which even its believers cannot, without uneasiness, distinctly and steadily contemplate. Long usage and Church authority alone prevent men from perceiving that the propositions, announcing it, are either simple contradictions, or statements empty of all meaning. The same remark is applicable to the notion of the two natures in Christ.

Before proceeding to justify this assertion, let me guard myself from the imputation of rejecting this doctrine *because it is mysterious*; or of supporting a system which insists on

* Analogy of Religion, part ii. ch. 3.

banishing all mysteries from religion. On any such system I should look with unqualified aversion, as excluding from faith one of its primary elements; as obliterating the distinction between logic and devotion, and tending only to produce an irreverent and narrow-minded dogmatism. "Religion without mystery" is a combination of terms, than which the Athanasian Creed contains nothing more contradictory; and the sentiment of which it is the motto, I take to be a fatal caricature of rationalism, tending to bring all piety into contempt. Until we touch upon the mysterious, we are not in contact with religion; nor are any objects reverently regarded by us, except such as, from their nature or their vastness, are felt to transcend our comprehension. God, of whose inscrutable immensity creation is but the superficial film; Christ, the love of whom surpasseth knowledge; futurity, veiled in awful shadows, yet illumined by a point or two of light; these, which are slightly known, and greatly unknown, with something definite, representing a vast indefinite, are the peculiar objects of trust and veneration. And the station which the soul occupies, when its devout affections are awakened, is always this: on the twilight, between immeasurable darkness and refreshing light; on the confines, between the seen and the unseen; where a little is discerned, and an infinitude concealed; where a few distinct conceptions stand, in confessed inadequacy, as symbols of ineffable realities: and we say, "Lo! these are a part of his ways; but the thunder of his power, who can understand?" And if this be true, the sense of what we do not know is as essential to our religion as the impression of what we do know: the thought of the boundless, the incomprehensible, must blend in our mind with the perception of the clear and true; the little knowledge we have must be clung to, as the margin of an invisible immensity; and all our positive ideas be regarded as the mere float to show the surface of the infinite deep.

But mystery, thus represented, offers any thing but objects of belief: it presents nothing to be appreciated by the understanding; but a realm of possibilities to be explored by a reverential imagination; and a darkness that may be felt to the centre of the heart. Being, by its very nature, the blank and privative space, offered to our contemplation, nothing affirmative can be derived thence; and to shape into definite words the things indefinite that dwell there, is to forget its character. We can no more delineate any thing within it, than an artist, stationed at midnight on an Alpine precipice, can paint the rayless scene beneath him.

There cannot, however, be a greater abuse of words, than to call the doctrine of the Trinity a mystery; and all the analogies by which it is attempted to give it this appearance, will instantly vanish on near inspection. It does not follow, because a mystery is something which we cannot understand, that every thing unintelligible is a mystery; and we must discriminate between that which is denied admittance to our reason, from its fulness of ideas, and that which is excluded by its emptiness; between a verbal puzzle and a symbolical and finite statement of an infinite truth. If I were to say of a triangle, each of the sides of this figure has an angle opposite to it, yet are there not three angles, but one angle, I should be unable to shelter myself, under the plea of mystery, from the charge of bald absurdity; and the reply would be obviously this: 'never was any thing less mysterious put into words; all your terms are precise and sharp, of definable meaning, and suggestive of nothing beyond: the difficulty is, not in understanding your propositions separately, but in reconciling them together; and this difficulty is so palpable, that either you have affirmed a direct contradiction, or you are playing tricks with words, and using them in a way which, being unknown to me, turns them into mere nonsense.' If to this I should answer, that the contradiction was

only apparent, for that the *three* and the *one* we
different senses; and that it would be very unfai to
so deep a mystery, the word *angle* to be restrain
signification; I should no doubt be called upor
what novel sense this familiar term was here em
in the interval between the expulsion of the o
the introduction of the new, it is mere worthless
And if, then, I should confess that the strange me
some inscrutable and superhuman idea, which
impossible to reach, and presumption to conjec
not be surprised to hear the following rejoinde
talking of human language as if it were something
an implement of human thought, and were like the works of nature, full of unfathomable wonders and unsuspected relations; *hidden properties of things* there doubtless are, but *occult meanings of words* there cannot be. Words are simply the signs of ideas, the media of exchange, invented to carry on the commerce of minds,—the counters, either stamped with thought, or worthless counterfeits. Nay more, in this monetary system of the intellectual world, there are no coins of precious metal that retain an intrinsic value of their own, when the image and superscription imprinted by the royalty of intelligence are gone; but mere paper-currency, whose whole value is conventional, and dependent on the mental credit of those who issue it: and to urge propositions on my acceptance, with the assurance that they have some invisible and mystic force, is as direct a cheat, as to pay me a debt with a bill palpably marked as of trivial value, but, in the illegible types of your imagination, printed to be worth the wealth of Crœsus.'

"Verbal mysteries," then, cannot exist, and the phrase is but a fine name for a contradiction or a riddle. The metaphysics which are invoked to palliate their absurdity, are fundamentally fallacious; and equally vain is it to attempt to press natural science into the service of defence. In the

case of a Theological mystery, we are asked to assent to two ideas, the one of which *excludes the other*; in the case of a natural mystery, we assent to two ideas, one of which *does not imply the other*. In the one case, conceptions which destroy each other are forced into conjunction; in the other, conceptions which had never suggested each other, are found to be related. When, for example, we say that the union, in our own constitution, of body and mind is perfectly mysterious, what do we really mean? Simply, that in the properties of body there is nothing which would lead us, antecedently, to expect any combination with the properties of mind; that we might have entertained for ever the notions of solidity, extension, colour, organization, without the remotest suspicion of such things as sensation, thought, volition, affection, being associated with them. The relation is unanticipated and surprising; for thought does not imply solidity: but then neither does it exclude it; the two notions stand altogether apart, nor does the one comprise any element inconsistent with the other. It is evident that it is far otherwise with the union of the two natures in Christ; the properties of the Divine nature, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, directly exclude the properties of the human nature, —weakness, fallibility, local movement and position; to affirm the one is the *only method we have* of denying the other; and to say of any Being, that besides having the omniscience of God, he had the partial knowledge of man, is to say that *in addition* to having *all* ideas, he possessed *some* ideas. All the natural analogies at which theologians hint in self-justification, fail in the same point. They tell me truly that it is a mystery to me how the grass grows. But by this is meant only, that from the causes which produce this phenomenon, I could not have antecedently predicted it; that if I had been a fresh comer on the globe, the meteorological conditions of the earth in spring might have been perceived by me without my suspecting, as a sequence, the development

of a green substance from the soil. We have again an example of an unforeseen relation; but between the members of that relation there is not even a seeming contradiction. Nor do I know of any other signification of the word mystery, as applied to our knowledge or belief, except in its usage to express magnitudes too great to be filled by our imaginations; as when we speak of the mysterious vastness of space, or duration of time: or, viewing these as the attributes of a Being, stand in awe of the immensity and eternity of God. But neither in this case is there any approach to the admission of ideas which exclude each other; on the contrary, our minds think of a small portion,—take into consideration a representative sample, of those immeasurable magnitudes, and necessarily conceive of all that is left behind, as perfectly similar, and believe the unknown to be an endless repetition of the known.

It is constantly affirmed that the doctrines of the Trinity, and of the two natures in Christ, comprise no contradiction; that it is not stated in the former that there are three Gods, but that God is three in one sense, and one in another; and in the latter, that Christ is two in one sense, and one in another.

I repeat and proceed to justify my statement, that if, in the enunciation of these tenets, language is used with any appreciable meaning, they are contradictions; and if not, they are senseless. I enter upon this miserable logomachy with the utmost repugnance; and am ashamed that in vindication of the simplicity of Christ, we should be dragged back into the barren conflicts of the schools.

"If," says Dr. Tattershall, "it had been said that He is ONE GOD and also THREE GODS, then the statement would have been self-contradictory, and no evidence could have established the truth of such a proposition."* Now I take it as admitted that this being is called ONE GOD; and that there

* Sermon on the Integrity of the Canon, p. 80.

are THREE GODS, is undoubtedly affirmed *distributively*, though not *collectively*; *each* of the three persons being separately announced as God. In the successive instances, which we are warned to keep distinct, and not confound, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, *proper Deity* is affirmed; in three separate cases, all that is requisite to constitute the proper notion of God, is said to exist; and this is exactly what is meant, and all that can be meant, by the statement, that there are three Gods. I submit then that the same creed teaches that there *are three Gods*, and also that there are *not three Gods*.

From this contradiction there is but one escape, and that is, by declaring that the word God is used in different senses; being applied to the triad in one meaning, and to the persons in another. If this be alleged, I wait to be informed of the new signification which is to be attached to this title, hitherto expressive of all the ideas I can form of intellectual and moral perfection. *More* than this, which exhausts all the resources of my thought, it cannot mean; and if it is to mean *less*, then it withholds from Him to whom it is applied something which I have hitherto esteemed as essential to God. Meanwhile, a word with an *occult meaning* is a word with no meaning; and the proposition containing it is altogether *senseless*.

But the favourite way of propounding this doctrine is the following; that God is three in one sense, and one in another; Three in Person, but only One *Individual, Subsistence,* or *Being*. The sense, then, if I understand aright, of the word *Person*, is different from the sense of the words *Individual, Being, or Subsistence*; and if so, I may ask what the respective senses are, and wherein they differ from each other. In reply I am assured, that by *person* is to be understood "a subject in which resides" "an entire set or series of those properties which are understood to constitute personality; viz. the property of *Life*, that of *Intelligence*, that of *Volition*, and that

of *Activity*, or *power of Action*."* Very well; this is distinct and satisfactory; and now for the *other sense*, viz. of the words *Individual, Being*, and *Subsistence*. About this an ominous silence is observed; and all information is withheld respecting the *quite different meaning* which these terms contain. Now I say, that their signification is the *very same* with that of the word Person, as above defined; that when you have enumerated to me a complete "set of personal attributes," you have called up the idea of an *Individual, Being*, or *Subsistence*; and that when you have mentioned to me these phrases, you have made me think of a complete set of personal attributes; that if you introduce me to two or three series of personal attributes, you force me to conceive of two or three beings; that a complete set of properties makes up an entire subsistence, and that an entire subsistence contains nothing else than its aggregate of properties. To take, for example, from Dr. Tattershall's list of qualities which are essential to personality; tell me of two *lives*, and I cannot but think of two individuals; of two *intelligences*, and I am necessitated to conceive of two intelligent beings; of two *wills* or powers of action, and it is impossible to restrain me from the idea of two Agents; and if each of these lives, intelligences, and volitions, be divine, of two Gods. The word substance, in fact, will *hold no more* than the word person; and to the *mind*, though not to the ear, the announcement in question really is, that there are three persons, and yet only one person. Thus men "slide insensibly," to use the words of Archbishop Whately, "into the unthought-of, but, I fear, not uncommon, error of Tritheism; from which they think themselves the more secure, because they always maintain the Unity of the Deity; though they gradually come to understand that Unity in a merely *figurative* sense; viz. as a Unity of substance,—a Unity of purpose, concert of action, &c; just as any one commonly

* Dr. Tattershall's Sermon on the Integrity of the Canon, p. 81.

says, 'My friend such-an-one and myself are one;' meaning that they pursue the same designs with entire mutual confidence, and perfect co-operation, and have that exact agreement in opinions, views, tastes, &c., which is often denoted by the expression *one mind.*"*

No doubt this excellent writer is correct in his impression, that the belief in three Gods is prevalent in this country, and kept alive by the creeds of his own church. And how does he avoid this consequence himself? By understanding the word Persons, not in Dr. Tattershall's, which is the ordinary English sense, but in the Latin signification, to denote the *relations*, or *capacities*, or *characters*, which an individual may sustain, the *several parts* which he may perform; so that the doctrine of the Trinity amounts only to this, that the One Infinite Deity bears three relations to us. This is plain Unitarianism, veiled behind the thinnest disguise of speech. Between this and Tritheism, it is vain to seek for any third estate. †

The contradiction involved in the doctrine of the two natures of Christ is of precisely the same nature and extent. We are assured that he had a perfect human constitution, consisting of the growing body and progressing mind of a man; and also a proper divine personality, comprising all the attributes of God. Now, during this conjunction, either the human mind within him was, or it was not, *conscious* of the co-existence and operation of the divine. If it was not, if the earthly and celestial intelligence dwelt together in the same body without mutual recognition, like two persons enclosed in the same dark chamber, in ignorance of each other, then were there two distinct beings, whom it is a mockery to call "one Christ;" the humanity of our Lord was unaffected by his Deity, and in all respects the same as if disjoined from it; and his person was but a moveable sign, indicating the place and presence of a God, who was as much foreign

* Elements of Logic. Appendix, in verb. Person. † See Note A.

to him as to any other human being. If the human nature had a joint consciousness with the divine, then nothing can be affirmed of his humanity separately; and from his sorrows, his doubts, his prayers, his temptations, his death, every trace of reality vanish away. If he were conscious, *in any sense*, of omnipotence, nothing but duplicity could make him say, "of mine own self I can do nothing;" if of omniscience, it was mere deception to affirm that he was ignorant of the time of his second advent; if of his equality with the Father, it was a quibble to say, "my Father is greater than I." I reject this hypothesis with unmitigated abhorrence, as involving in utter ruin the character of the most perfect of created beings.

The intrinsic incredibility then of these doctrines, involving, as they do, "clear immoralities and self-contradictions," would throw discredit on the claims of any work professing to reveal them on the authority of God. And whether we listen to the demands of Scripture on our reverential attention, must depend on this:—whether these tenets are found there or not. And to this inquiry let us now proceed.

One remark I would make in passing, on the supposed value of the theory of the two natures, as a *key* to unlock certain difficult passages of the Bible, and to reconcile their apparent contradictions. Christ, it is affirmed, is sometimes spoken of as possessing human qualities, sometimes as possessing divine; on the supposition of his being simply man, one class of these passages contradicts us; on the assumption of his being simply God, another. Let us then pronounce him both, and every thing is set right; every part of the document becomes clear and intelligible.*

Now which, let me ask, is the greater difficulty: the obscure language, which we wish to make consistent, or the prodigious hypothesis, devised for the reconcilement of its

* See Mr. Jones's Lecture on the Proper Humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, pp. 241, 242.

parts? The sole perplexity in these portions of Scripture consists in this,—that the divine and the human nature are felt to be incompatible, and not to be predicable of the same being: if we did not feel this, we should be conscious of no opposition; and the ingenious device for relieving the bewilderment, is to deny the incompatibility, and boldly to affirm the union. If you will but believe *both* sides of the contradiction, you will find the contradiction disappear! What would be thought of such a principle of interpretation applied to similar cases of verbal discrepancy? It is stated, for example, in the Book of Genesis, that Abraham and Lot received a divine communication respecting the destruction of Sodom; and the bearers of the message are spoken of, in one place, as Jehovah himself; in another, as angels; in a third, as men.* What attention would be given to any interpreter who should say; 'it is clear that these persons could not be simply God, for they are called men; nor simply men, for they are called angels; nor simply angels, for they are called God: they must have had a triple nature, and been at the same time perfect God, perfect angel, and perfect man?' Would such an explanation be felt to solve any thing? Or take one other case, in which Moses is called God with a distinctness which cannot be equalled in the case of Christ: "Moses called together all Israel, and said to them:....I have led you forty years in the wilderness; your clothes have not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot. Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink; that ye might know that *I am the Lord your God.*"† What relief, let me ask, should we obtain from the difficulty of this passage, by being told that Moses had two natures in one person, and must be received as God-man? Who would accept "a key" like this, and not feel that in loosening one difficulty, it locked fast another, and left us in labyrinthine darkness?

* Genesis, xviii. 1, 2, 22; xix. 1, 10, 15. † Deut. xxix. 2, 5, 6.

II. When a Trinitarian, and a Unitarian, agree to consult Scripture together, and to bring their respective systems to this written standard, it is essential that they should determine beforehand what it is that they must look for: what internal characters of the books are to be admitted in evidence; what kind and degree of proof each is entitled to expect. Each should say to the other before the Bible is opened, "Tell me now, distinctly, what are the marks and indications in these records, which you admit would disprove your scheme: what must I succeed in establishing, in order to convince you that you are mistaken?" The mutual exchange of some such tests is indispensable to all useful discussion. I am not aware that any rules of this kind have ever been laid down, or I would willingly adopt them. Meanwhile I will propose a few; and state the phenomena which I think a Unitarian has a right to expect in the Bible, if the Athanasian doctrine* be revealed there, and its reception made a condition of salvation. If the criteria be in any respect unreasonable, let it be shown *where* they are erroneous or unfair. I am not conscious of making any extravagant or immodest petition for evidence.

If, then, the existence of three Persons, each God, in the One Infinite Deity,—and the temporary union of the second of these Persons, with a perfect man, so as to constitute One Christ,—be among the prominent facts communicated in the written Revelation of the Bible, we may expect to find there the following characters:

(1.) That somewhere or other, among its thousand pages, these doctrines, so easily and compendiously expressed, will be plainly stated.

(2.) That as it is important not to confound the three persons in the Godhead, they will be kept distinct, having some *discriminative and not interchangeable titles*; and moreover,

* It is hardly necessary to observe, that I use the word "Athanasian" to denote the doctrine of the *Creed* so called; not of St. Athanasius himself, who is known to have had no hand in the composition of that formula.

since each has precisely the same claim to be called GOD, that word will be assigned to them with something like an impartial distribution.

(3.) That as, in consistency with the UNITY, the term God will always be restricted to *one only being or substance;* so, in consistency with the TRINITY, it will *never* be limited to ONE PERSON to the exclusion of the OTHER TWO.

(4.) That when the PERSONS are named by their *distinctive divine titles*, their equality will be observed, nor any one of them be represented as subordinate to any other.

(5.) That since the MANHOOD of Christ commenced, and its peculiar functions ceased, with his *incarnation*, it will never be found ascribed to him in relation to events before or after this period.

All these phenomena, I submit, are essential to make scripture consistent with Athanasianism; and not one of these phenomena does scripture contain. This it is now my business to show.

III. (1.) Is then our expectation realized, of finding somewhere within the limits of the Bible, a plain, unequivocal statement of these doctrines? Confessedly not; and notions which, in one breath, are pronounced to be indispensable to salvation, are in another admitted to be no matters of revelation at all, but rather left to be gathered by human deduction from the sacred writings. "The doctrine of the Trinity," says a respectable Calvinistic writer, Mr. Carlile of Dublin, "is rather *a doctrine of inference and of indirect intimation*, deduced from what is revealed respecting the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and intimated in the notices of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, than a doctrine directly and explicitly declared." And elsewhere the same author says, "*A doctrine of inference ought never to be placed on a footing of equality with a doctrine of direct and explicit revelation.*"* If this be so (and the method of

* Jesus Christ, the great God our Saviour, pp. 81, 369.

successive steps by which it is attempted, in this very controversy, to establish the doctrine of the Trinity, proves Mr. Carlile to be right), then to deny this mere *inference* is not to deny a *revelation.* But why, we may be permitted to inquire, this shyness and hesitancy in the scriptures in communicating such cardinal truths? Whence this reserve in the Holy Spirit about matters so momentous?* What is the source of this strange contrast between the formularies of the Church of England, and those of the primitive Church of Christ? The Prayer-book would seem to have greatly the

* It is orthodox, at the present day, to affirm that the mysteries of the Godhead and Incarnation of our Lord were explicitly taught by himself throughout his ministry, as well as by his apostles afterwards; and Mr. Jones (Lecture, p. 237) assures us that he "received *divine homage*, whilst on earth, from inspired men and angelic spirits." This shows how much more clear-sighted is modern orthodoxy than was ancient: for the Fathers thought that a great part of the "mystery" of these doctrines consisted in the *secrecy* in which they were long wrapped. "In the silence of God," Ignatius assures us, were the Incarnation and the Lord's death accomplished; and the ecclesiastical writers of the first six centuries seem not only to have admitted that our Lord concealed his divinity from his disciples, and enjoined on his apostles great caution in this matter, but to have discerned in this suppression a profound wisdom, of which they frequently express their admiration. They urge that the Jews could never have been brought round to the faith, if these doctrines had not been kept back for awhile,—a strange thing, by the way, if the whole ritual and Scriptures of this people were created to prefigure these mysteries. But Ignatius threw out a suggestion, which, from the eagerness wherewith it was caught up by succeeding writers, was evidently thought a happy discovery: it was necessary *to conceal these mysteries from the Devil, or he would have been on his guard, and defeated every thing.* The hint of the venerable saint is brief: "the Virginity of Mary, and the Birth and Death of the Lord were hidden from the Prince of this world." But the idea is variously enlarged upon by the later Fathers; for, as Cotelier observes, "Res ipsa quam Ignatius exprimit, passim apud sanctos Patres invenitur." Jerome adds, that the vigilance of the Devil, who expected the Messiah to be born in some Jewish *family*, was thus eluded; and the Author of an anonymous fragment of the same age, cited by Isaac Vos, suggests that, if Satan had known, he would never have put it into men's hearts to crucify Jesus. And Jobius, a monk of the sixth century, quoted by Photius in his Bibliotheca, and complimented by the learned Patriarch as τῶν ἱερῶν γραφῶν μελέτης οὐκ ἄπειρος, says, "It was necessary to keep in the shade the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word, both for the sake of conciliating the hearers, and in order to escape the notice of the Prince of Darkness."—See S. Ignat. Ep. ad Magnes. ch. xix.; Patr. Apost. Le Clerc's Ed. Notes; and Priestley's Early Opinions, b. iii, ch. 3, 4.

advantage over the Bible; for it removes all doubts at once, and makes the essentials most satisfactorily plain; compensating, shall we say, by "frequent repetitions," for the defects and ambiguities of Holy writ? Nay, it is a singular fact, that in the original languages of the Old and New Testaments, *no phraseology exists in which it is possible to express the creeds of the Church.* We give to the most learned of our opponents the whole vocabulary of the Hebrew and the Greek Scriptures, and we say, "with these materials translate for us into either language, or any mixture of both, your own Athanasian Creed." They well know, that it cannot be done: and ought not then this question to be well weighed? if the terms *indispensable* for the expression of certain ideas are absent from the Bible, how can the ideas themselves be present? Scarcely can men *have* any important notions without the corresponding words,—which the mind coins as fast as it feels the need; and most assuredly they cannot *reveal* them. Let us hear no more the rash assertion that these tenets may be proved from any page of scripture; we frankly offer every page, with unrestricted liberty to rewrite the whole; and we say, with all this, they cannot be expressed.

(2.) Let us proceed to apply our second criterion, and ascertain whether the divine persons, whom it is essential to distinguish, *are* so distinguished by *characteristic titles* in scripture; and share among them, with any approach to equality, the name of GOD.

It is self-evident, that a *verbal revelation* can make known *distinctions* only by *distinctive words*; that if two or more objects of thought receive interchangeable names, and the term which had seemed to be appropriated to the one is transferred to the other, those objects are not discriminated, but confounded. We require, then, separate words in scripture to denote the following notions; of the One Divine Substance, or Triune Being;—of the First, of the Second, of the Third

person, in this infinite existence;—of the Divine Nature and of the Human Nature of Christ. For the Trinity, it is acknowledged, there is no scripture name; unless, indeed, the plural form of the word God in the Hebrew language is to be claimed for this purpose; and thus an attempt be still made to confirm our faith by an argument which an orthodox commentator calls "weak and vain, not to say silly and absurd."* "From the plural form of the word Elohim," says the great Calvin, "it is usual to infer that there are three persons in the Godhead. But as this proof of so important a point appears to me by no means solid, I will not insist upon the word. Let me then warn my readers against such VIOLENT INTERPRETATIONS."† "I must be allowed," says Dr. Lee, Arabic Professor in the University of Cambridge, "to object to such methods of supporting an article of faith, which stands in need of no such support."‡ Of the first Person in the Trinity, the word "*Father*," it is to be presumed, may be considered as the distinctive name; of the Second person, the terms *Son, Son of God,* and *the Word* or *Logos*; of the Third person, the phrase *Holy Ghost, Spirit, Paraclete*; and of the human nature of Christ, as distinguished from the Second distinction in the Trinity, the names *Jesus of Nazareth, Son of Man,* the *Man Christ Jesus.* If these names be *not* distinctive, there certainly are no others; and if there be none at all, then the *distinctions themselves* are not impressed upon the record; they are altogether destitute of signs and expressions, and

* Lambertus Danaus, cited by Drusius, in his Diss. de nom. Elohim. Crit. Sacr. Tractatt. t. 1. See also Drus. de quæsitis per Epist. 66.

† Comment. in Gen. i. 1. Calvin adds, "Imagining that they have here a proof against the Arians, they involve themselves in the Sabellian error: because Moses afterwards subjoins that *Elohim spake*, and that *the Spirit of Elohim brooded over the waters.* If we are to understand that the three Persons are indicated, there will be no distinction among them: for it will follow that the Son was self-generated, and that the Spirit is not of the Father, but of himself." For further notice of this point see Note B.

‡ Grammar of the Hebrew Language, art. 228, 6. Note.

must be pronounced purely imaginary. Meanwhile we will assume the titles, which I have just enumerated, to be appropriated to the purposes which have been assigned. To the use of the words *Father* and *Son* I shall have particular occasion to revert.

The usage of the word *God*, in the New Testament, presents us with some remarkable phenomena. The Athanasian doctrine offers to our belief four objects of thought, to which this word is equally and indifferently applicable; the Triune Divine Being; and each of the three Persons; and its advocates profess to have learned from scripture the well-adjusted equipoise of these claims upon the great and sacred name. We are hardly then prepared by its instructions, distinct and emphatic as they are, for the following fact; allowing every one of the Trinitarian interpretations to be correct, the word God is used in the New Testament TEN times of Christ; and of some other object, upwards of THIRTEEN HUNDRED times.* Whence this astonishing disproportion? *Some cause*, —something corresponding to it in the minds of the writers, it must have had; nor is it easy to understand, how an equal disposition of the Divine Persons in the habitual conceptions of the Authors, could lead to so unequal an award of the grand expression of Divinity.

Even the few instances, which for the moment I have allowed, will disappear on a nearer examination. This appears to be the proper place to pass under review the most remarkable passages, which, under Trinitarian exposition, *appear* to sanction the doctrine of the proper Deity of Christ.

(a.) The evangelist Matthew applies to Christ† the following words of the prophet Isaiah, which, in order to give the truest impression of the original, I will quote from the

* See Scripture Proofs and Scriptural Illustrations of Unitarianism, by John Wilson, second edition, 1837, p. 33, where will be found a curious table, exhibiting the usage of the word *God*, in every book of the New Testament. Mr. Wilson has collected his materials with great industry, and arranged them with skill.

† Matt. i. 23.

translation of Bishop Lowth: "Behold the Virgin conceiveth, and beareth a son; and she shall call his name Emmanuel."* As this name is significant, and means "God with us," it is argued, that it could not be assigned to any one who was not properly God.

Now even if this name were really assigned by the prophet to Christ, the most superficial Hebraist must be aware that it teaches us nothing respecting the nature and person of our Lord. "The fact is unquestionable," says Dr. Pye Smith, "that the gratitude or hope of individuals, in the ancient scriptural times, was often expressed by the imposition of significant appellations on persons or other objects, in the composition of which Divine names and titles were frequently employed; these are, therefore, nothing but short sentences, declarative of some blessing possessed or expected."† Thus the name *Lemuel* means *God with them; Elijah, God the Lord; Elihu, God is he.* So that, to use the words of one of the ablest of living Trinitarian writers, "to maintain that the name Immanuel proves the doctrine in question is a fallacious argument."‡

But, in truth, this name is not given to the Messiah by the prophet; and the citation of it in this connection by the evangelist is an example of those loose accommodations, or even misapplications, of passages in the Old Testament by writers in the New, which the most resolute orthodoxy is

* Isaiah vii. 14. The whole passage is as follows:

"Behold the virgin conceiveth, and beareth a son;
And she shall call his name Emmanuel.
Butter and honey shall he eat,
When he shall know to refuse what is evil, and to choose what is good:
For before this child shall know
To refuse the evil, and to choose the good;
The land shall become desolate,
By whose two kings thou art distressed."

† Quoted from Wilson's Illustrations, p. 117.

‡ Letters on the Trinity, by Moses Stuart, Professor of Sacred Literature in the Theological Seminary, Andover, U. S. Bell. ed. p. 161.

unable to deny; and which (though utterly destructive of the theory of verbal inspiration) the real dignity of the Gospel in no way requires us to deny. Turning to the original prophecy, and not neglecting the context and historical facts which illustrate it, we find that Jerusalem was threatened with instant destruction by the confederated kings of Syria and Samaria; that, to the terrified Jewish monarch Ahaz, the prophet is commissioned to promise the deliverance of his metropolis and ruin to his enemies; that he even fixes the date of this happy reverse; and that he does this, not in a direct way, by telling the number of months or years that shall elapse, but by stating that ere a certain child, either already born, or about to be born within a year, shall be old enough to distinguish between good and evil, the foe shall be overthrown; and that this same child, whose infancy is thus chronologically used, shall eat the honey of a land peaceful and fertile once more. Nor is this interpretation any piece of mere heretical ingenuity. Dr. Pye Smith observes: "It seems to be as clear as words can make it, that the Son promised was born within a year after the giving of the prediction; that his being so born at the assigned period, was the sign or pledge that the political deliverance announced to Ahaz should certainly take place."* Without assenting to the latter part of this remark, I quote it simply to show that, in the opinion of this excellent and learned Divine, the Emmanuel could not have been born *later* than a year after the delivery of the prophecy. It will immediately appear that there is nothing to preclude the supposition of his being already born, at the very time when it was uttered.

Who this child, and who his mother, really were, are questions wholly unconnected with the present argument. As the *date*, and not the *person*, was the chief subject of the Prophet's declaration, any son of Jerusalem, arriving at years of discretion within the stated time, would fulfil the main

* Scripture Testimony to the Messiah, 2nd edit. vol. i. p. 382.

conditions of the announcement; and, as a sign of d deliverance, might receive the name Emmanuel. In fa however, the child, in the view of Isaiah, seems to have been no other than the King's own son, Hezekiah; and the Virgin Mother to have been, in conformity with a phraseology familiar to every careful reader of the Old Testament, the royal and holy city of Jerusalem. Amos, speaking of the city, says, "The virgin of Israel is fallen."* Jeremi lamenting over its desolation, exclaims, "Let mine eyes r down with tears night and day, and let them not cease; fo the virgin daughter of my people is broken, with a ma breach, with a very grievous blow."† Micah, apostropi the citadel, bursts out, "O tower,"—"stronghold of the dau ter of Zion,"—"is there no king in thee? Is thy counsellor perished? For pangs have taken thee, as a woman in travail."‡ The fact that Hezekiah was already born, seems to confirm rather than to invalidate this interpretation. A living child to his parents, he was yet the city's embryo king. What sign more fitted to re-assure the terrified and faithless monarch than this: that, ere his own first-born should reach the years of judgment, his twofold enemy should be cast down? What language, indeed, could be more natural respecting an heir to the throne, of whom great expectations were excited in grievous times? The royal city dreamt of his promised life with gladness; he was the child of Jerusalem, in the hour of her anguish given to her hopes; in after years of peace fulfilling them.§

(b.) This prince appears evidently to have been the person described also in another passage, from which, though never cited in the New Testament as applicable to Christ at all, modern theologians are accustomed to infer his Deity. It is as follows:—"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and his name shall be called wonderful; counsellor; the

* Amos v. 2.
† Jeremiah xiv. 17.
‡ Micah iv. 8, 9. See the whole context.
§ See Note C.

mighty God; the everlasting Father; the Prince of Peace."* We have only to look at the terms in which this great one's dominion is described, and the characters that are to mark his reign, in order to assure ourselves that he is some person very different from Christ; the Northern district of Palestine is to be delivered by him from the sufferings of an Assyrian invasion; he is to break the yoke which Tiglath-Pileser had imposed on the land of Gennesareth; to destroy the rod of the oppressor; to make a conflagration of the spoils of the battle-field, and burn the greaves and blood-stained garments of his country's enemies.† It seems to me impossible to imagine a more violent distortion of Scripture than the application of this passage to Christ. But, be it even otherwise, there are only two of these titles which can be thought of any avail in this argument. One is, the "everlasting Father;" which, if it proves any thing, establishes that the second person in the Trinity is the first person, or else that the word *Father* must be given up as a distinctive name,—a concession destructive of the whole doctrine. The other is the phrase, "the mighty God," or by inversion, "God the mighty;" on which I presume no stress would have been laid if, instead of being presented to us in a translation, it had been given in the original, and called GABRIEL. For the word *God*, Martin Luther substitutes (Held) *hero*, as the juster rendering.‡ But, in truth, it is sad trifling thus to crumble Hebrew names to pieces, in order to yield a few scarce visible atoms of argument to replenish the precarious pile of church orthodoxy, wasted by the attrition of reason, the healthful dews of nature, and the sunshine and the air of God.§

(c.) Let us turn to the Proem of St. John's Gospel; that most venerable and beautiful of all the delineations which

* Isaiah ix. 5, 6.

† Isaiah viii. 23—ix. 4. Compare 2 Kings xv. 29; 1 Chronicles v. 26.

‡ Martin Luther's Version, *in loc.*

§ See Note D.

Scripture furnishes, of the twofold relation of Christ's spirit, to the Father who gave it its illumination, and to the brethren who were blessed by its light. To our cold understandings, indeed, this passage must inevitably be obscure; for it deals with some of the characteristic conceptions of that lofty speculative reason which, blending the refinements of Platonism with the imaginative license of the oriental schools, assumed in early times the intellectual empire of the church, and has kept the world ever since in deliberation on its creations. I do not mean that the Apostle was a Platonist, or a disciple of any philosophical system. But he wrote in Asia Minor, where he was surrounded by the *influences*, in constant familiarity with the *terms*, and accustomed to the *modes of thought*, peculiar to the sects of speculative religionists most prevalent in his time. At all events, it is *a fact* that he uses language nowhere employed by the other Evangelists or Apostles; and that this language is the very same which is the common stock, and technical vocabulary of Philo, the Platonizing Jew, and several Christian writers of the same or a kindred school. Before, however, endeavouring to suggest the idea which the Apostle did mean to convey, let me call your attention to that which he did not.

There cannot be a more misplaced confidence, than that with which the introductory verses of St. John's Gospel are appealed to by the holders of the Athanasian doctrine. Whatever explanation is adopted, which does not throw contempt upon the composition of the Evangelist, is at all events subversive of their system: and I do not hesitate to say, that *this* is the only thing which I can regard as certain respecting this passage; that *it never could have been written by an Athanasian.* In order to test this assertion, it is not necessary to look beyond the first verse; and before we read it, let us allow the Trinitarian to choose any sense he pleases of the word God, which is its leading term. Let us suppose that he accepts it as meaning here "THE FATHER," and that

the Word or Logos means GOD THE SON. With these substitutions the verse reads thus:—

In the beginning was the Son; and the Son was with the Father; and the Son was the Father. This surely is to "confound the persons."

Let us then suppose the meaning different, and the whole Godhead or TRINITY to be denoted by the word GOD. The verse would then read thus:—

In the beginning was the Son; and the Son was with the Trinity, and the Son was the Trinity.

We are no nearer to consistency than before: and it is evident that before the Trinitarian can find in the passage any distinct enunciation, the term GOD must be conceived to bear two different meanings in this short verse,—a verse so symmetrical in its construction as to put the reader altogether off his guard against such a change. He must read it thus:—

In the beginning was the second person in the Trinity; and the second person was with the first; and the second person was possessed of divine attributes as such.

We might surely ask, without unreasonableness, why, when the *society* or personal affinity of the Son in the Godhead, is mentioned in the middle clause, the companionship of the *Father only* is noticed, and silence observed respecting the *Holy Spirit*; who at that moment could not possibly have been absent from the conceptions of any Athanasian writer. But independently of this, the awkwardness of the construction, the violence of the leading transition of meaning, render the interpretation altogether untenable. If it be true, never surely was there a form of speech worse devised for the conveyance of the intended ideas.

In order to give the passage its true force, there is no occasion to assign to the word GOD any but its usual signification; as the name of the One infinite Person or Being who created and rules the universe. But it is less easy to em-

brace and exhibit with any distinctness, the notion implied in the phrase WORD or LOGOS. The ancient speculative schools, seeing that the Deity had existed from eternity, and therefore in a long solitude before the origin of creation, distinguished between his intrinsic nature,—deep, remote, primeval, unfathomable,*—and that portion of his mind which put itself forth, or expressed itself by works, so as to come into voluntary and intelligible relations to men.† This section of the Divine Mind, to which was attributable the authorship of the divine works, they called the LOGOS, or the IMAGE of God; both terms denoting the *expression* or *power which outwardly reveals* internal qualities; the one taking its metaphor from the *ear*, through which we make known our sentiments by speech; the other from the *eye*, to which is addressed the natural language of feature and lineament. If I might venture on an illustration which may sound strangely to modern hearers, I should say that the Logos was conceived of in relation to God, much as with us *Genius* is, in relation to the soul of its possessor; to denote that peculiar combination of intellectual and moral attributes, which produces great, original, creative works,—works which let you into the spirit and affections, as well as the understanding, of the Author. Any one who can so possess himself with the speculative temper of Christian antiquity, as to use with reverence the phrase *genius of God*, would find it, I am persuaded, a useful English substitute (though I am well aware, not a perfect equivalent) for the word Logos. Dwelling within the blank immensity of God, was this illuminated region of Divine ideas; in which, as in the fancy and the studio of an artist, the formative conceptions, the original sketches and designs, the inventive projects of beauty and good, shaped and perfected themselves; and from which they issued forth, to imprint themselves upon matter and life, and pass into executed and visible realities. From the

* Λόγος ἐνδιάθετος. † Λόγος προφορικὸς.

energy of this creative spirit, or blessed genius of God, two very different orders of results were conceived to flow:—the forms and symmetrical arrangements of the material universe, by which, as by the engraving of a seal, Deity stamped his perfections into *vision*: and the intuitions of pure reason and conscience in the human soul, by which, as by a heavenly tone or vibration, Deity thrilled himself into *consciousness*. And when I say *Deity*, I mean the *Logos of Deity*; for this alone, it was conceived, stood in any relation to us; the rest was an unexpressed and unfathomable Essence.

This portion of the Divine Infinitude was incessantly and vividly personified; so as to assume, even in the writings of the Jew and undoubted Monotheist Philo, the frequent aspect of a second God: though scarcely have you taken up this idea from one series of passages, before you are recalled and corrected by others, clearly showing that this is a false impression, too hastily derived from the intensity of the imagery and language. Indeed the distinction between a mere personification and a positive mythological personage is very faint. When a writer personifies an abstraction, *for the moment* he conceives of this object of thought as a person; and were this state of mind perpetuated, he would *believe* it to be a person. But his mental attitude changes; and, in a less excited hour, that which had constructed and painted itself almost into a being, fades away again into an attribute. Hence the fluctuation of writers, at once imaginative and speculative, like Philo and some of the early Christian Fathers, between the logical and the mythical method of speaking of the properties of the Divine nature. And it may be remarked, that the Apostle John partook, though in a very slight degree, of the same tendency. He was fond of abstract words: calling our Saviour the *way*, rather than the *guide*; the *truth*, rather than the *teacher*; the *light*, rather than the *illuminator*; and so I conceive, in the commencement of his Gospel, the *inspiration*, rather than the *inspired* of God. And then, as

if to remedy the indistinctness of this mode of representation, he resorts to personification: thus, at the dictation of his reverence, first reducing the living person to an abstraction; and afterwards, at the bidding of his imagination, recreating the abstraction into a person. The extent to which this personification may be carried, by an author who certainly had no notion but of One personal God, may be estimated from a few sentences, referring to this very conception of the Logos, from the Jewish Philo. The invisible and intellectual Logos, he says, is the image of God, by whom the world was fashioned; his first-born son, his vicegerent in the government of the world; the mediator between God and his creatures; the healer of ills; God's divine Son, whose mother is wisdom. In another place, the Logos is the very same with the wisdom of God; the most ancient angel, the first-born of God; to the resemblance of whom every one, who would be a son of God, must fashion himself. He is even the "second God." "To the Archangel, and most ancient Logos," says this writer, "God granted this distinguished office, that he should stand on the confines of creation, and separate between it and its Creator. With the incorruptible being he is the suppliant for perishable mortality. He is the ambassador of the Supreme to the subject creation. He announces the will of the Ruler to his subjects. And he delights in the office, and boasts of it, saying; I had stood between you and the Lord as mediator; being neither unbegotten as God, nor begotten as you, but between the two extremes, and acting as hostage to both." * All this sounds very mysterious; the important thing to bear in mind is, that the writer is certainly speaking not of any separate divine person, but of the impersonated attributes of One Sole Supreme.

* Phil. Jud. Op. Schrey et H. J. Meyer. Francof. 1691. De Mundi opific. p. 5. C. p. 6. C. Leg. Alleg. p. 93. B, C, D. De somniis, pp. 574. E. 575. C. E. 576. E. De confus. Ling. p. 341. B. C. Quis rer. div. hæres, p. 509. B. C. Euseb. Prep. Evang. VII. 13.

St. John then, I conceive, does the very same; only he carefully warns us against thinking of his personification as otherwise than identical with the Supreme, by saying outright, that the Logos is God; and therefore that whatever he may say about the former, is really to be understood as spoken of the latter. The whole proem divides itself into two ideas: that from the Genius or Logos of God have proceeded two sets of divine works; the material world; and the soul and inspiration of heaven shed upon the world through Christ. His object, I believe, is to link together these two effects as successive and analogous results, physical in one case, spiritual in the other, of the same divine and holy energy. Having warned us, as I have said, in the very first verse, that this energy is not really a person distinct from the Supreme, he abandons himself without reserve to the beautiful personification which follows; assuring us that thereby were all things made at first, and thereby were all men being enlightened now; that our very world, which felt that forming hand of old, had not discerned the blessed influence which again descended to regenerate it: ungrateful treatment! as of one who came unto his own, and his own received him not. Yet were there some of more perceptive conscience and better hearts; and they, be they Jew or Gentile, whose spirits sprung to the divine embrace, were permitted to become, by reflected similitude, the Sons of God.

Thus far, that is, to the end of the thirteenth verse, there is no mention of Jesus Christ as an individual; there is only the unembodied personification of the abstract energy of God in the original design, and the newer regeneration of the world. Nor should there be any difficulty in this separation of the Divine Spirit from its positive and personal results. Of the *Creative* Mind of God we can easily think, as not only prior to the act of creation, but still apart from the forms of matter; and so can we of the *illuminating or regenerative* Mind of God, as not only prior to its manifestation in

Christ, but apart from its embodiment in his person. In the next verse, however, the heavenly personification is dropped upon the man Jesus; the mystic divine light is permitted to sink into the deeps of his humanity; it vanishes from separate sight: and there comes before us, and henceforth lives within our view throughout the Gospel, the Man of Sorrows, the Child of God, with the tears and infirmities of our mortal nature, and the moral perfection of the Divine. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth."*

(d.) The spirit of this exposition is directly applicable to another passage, adduced to prove the deity of Christ: "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."† It is well known that in the most approved text, the word *God* does not exist, and the passage reads, "He who was manifest in the flesh," &c. Were it permitted to indulge personal wishes in such matters, I could desire that the common rendering were the true one. I know of no more exact description of Christ, than that he was a living and human manifestation of the character of God.‡

(e.) Let us now turn to the introductory verses of the Epistle to the Hebrews; a passage which is claimed as the clearest disclosure of the Deity of Christ; for no discoverable reason, except that from its great obscurity, it *reveals* less, perhaps, than any other portion of Scripture, except the *Revelations*. From the earliest times it has been justly regarded as exceedingly doubtful whether the Apostle Paul was the author of this letter; the difficulties and darkness of which are of a very different character from those which embarrass us in his noble writings, and arise from mental habits far

* See Note E. † 1 Tim. iii. 16.

‡ Εἷς θεός ἐστιν, ὁ φανερώσας ἑαυτὸν διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ.—S. Ignatii Epist. ad Magnes. c. viii.

more artificial and less healthy than his. But whatever be the authority of this work, and whatever the doctrine of its introductory portion, it is so far from giving any support to the Trinitarian sentiments, that it affords, even in its most exalted language, arguments sufficient to disprove them. The first verses of the epistle, altered slightly from the common translation, in order to exhibit more faithfully the meaning of the original, are as follows:—

"God who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath, at the close of these days, spoken unto us by his Son; whom he hath appointed heir of all things; through whom also he made the ages of the world; who, being the brightness of his glory, and the image of his nature, and ruling all things by the word of his power, having by himself made purification of our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high; being become so much greater than the angels, as he hath obtained by inheritance a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, 'thou art my son; I have this day begotten thee?' And again, 'I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son.' And whenever he may again introduce his first-born into the world, it (*i. e.* the Scripture) saith, 'let all the angels of God pay homage to him.' And with reference to the angels, it saith, 'who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.' But with reference to the son, it saith, 'thy throne, O God! is for ever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom; thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore, O God! thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.'"

I terminate the quotation here, because I do not believe that the following words have any relation to Christ. The writer's argument not only admits, but requires, that they should be referred to the supreme God and Father of all.

Now observe with what distinctness the most lofty phrases

applied to our Lord in this passage, affirm his subordination, and deny his equality with the Infinite Father. At the very moment when he is addressed as God, he is said to have *fellows*, and to be set above them as a reward for his goodness; in the same breath which declares his throne to be for ever and ever, he is described as having a God who anoints him with the oil of gladness. He is greater than the angels, not by nature, but by the gift of a better inheritance. He is not the original divine effulgence, but an *emanation* of that glory, an *image* of that perfection; and in constituting the worlds, or rather the great æras of its appointed history, he is not the designer of its revolutions, but the instrument of God in effecting them.* If this teaches the supreme Deity of Christ, in what language is it possible to disclaim and to deny supremacy?

With respect to the peculiar terms of dignity applied in this passage to Christ, I would observe as follows:—

The words "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," were originally addressed by a poetical courtier to Solomon or some other Hebrew monarch on his accession and marriage;† nor can the slightest reason be assigned for supposing that the ode in which the words occur had any reference more remote than the immediate occasion of its composition. The first half of the Psalm ‡ is addressed to the prince; the remainder to his bride,§ who is exhorted to give her undivided affection to the new relation which she has formed; to "forget her own people, and the house of her father;" and who is consoled with the hope, that "instead of her fathers she shall have her sons, whom she shall make princes through all the land." Those who can satisfy themselves with the theological conceit, that this is a prophetic allegory, descriptive of the relation between Christ and his Church, appear to have placed themselves so far beyond the reach of all the rules of

* Δι' οὗ, not ὑφ' οὗ.
† Psalm xlv.
‡ v. 1—9.
§ v. 10—17.

interpretation, that argument becomes fruitless; *no possible media of refutation exist.* They must belong to the class who have succeeded in spiritualizing the Song of Solomon; to whom therefore it has ceased to be a matter of the smallest consequence, *what words* are presented to them in Scripture, as they have attained the faculty of seeing one set of ideas, wherever they look, and an incapacity to see any thing else. Bishop Young, convinced that the prophetic claims of this Psalm must be relinquished, and that the term *God* in it is addressed merely to the Hebrew monarch, and therefore used in an inferior sense, renders the passage thus; "thy throne, O mighty prince, is for ever and ever." * And surely, even those who can persuade themselves that scripture can have two intended meanings, and who imagine the poem in question to have referred primarily to Solomon, and remotely to the Messiah, must perceive that a word by which the Jewish prince might be accosted, cannot imply the supreme deity of Christ. Christ is said, in the common translation, to have made the worlds; but it is generally admitted that the phrase does not denote the construction of the material universe, and is even incapable of bearing this meaning. It describes Jesus as the agent of God in bringing about the successive states of our social world; in introducing the preluding revolutions, and the final catastrophe of human affairs. If it be asked, *what ages, what revolutions,* are thus attributed to the instrumentality of Christ? the answer must be sought in

* New Translation of the Psalms, by Dr. M. Young, Bishop of Clonfert; *in loc.* Comp. Preface.—When resident in Dublin, I enjoyed the advantage of consulting this posthumous work, suppressed before its publication, for reasons sufficiently obvious to those who know the work, and have noticed the reception which orthodoxy gives to honest and impartial biblical criticism and exegesis. See Mr. Wellbeloved's Bible *in loc.* where Bishop Young's translation is cited. May I venture to refer our learned opponents to the last-mentioned work, whenever they think proper to examine what kind of Old Testament theology a Unitarian may hold? It would be curious to know, probably perplexing even to "ordained clergymen" to determine, on which horn of the dilemma the Rev. Hebraists in Christ Church must fix Mr. Wellbeloved;—"*defective scholarship?*"—or "*uncandid and dishonest criticism?*"

the fact, that the author was a Hebrew, writing to Hebrews. He seized on the grand Jewish division of time and Providence into two portions,—the period before, and the period after, the coming of the Messiah; and these were the two AGES, frequently called "the present world," and "the world to come," which Christ is said to have constituted. Does any one inquire, in what way our Lord, if he were not at least pre-existent, could administer the arrangements of Providence in the former of these periods, that is, before his own mission to mankind? I submit, in answer, a suggestion which seems to me essential to the clear understanding of all the Christian records, and especially of those which relate to the years after the ascension. The advent of the Messiah was represented, *during those years, not as past*, but as *still future*;* they were regarded as the close of the old and earthly epoch, not the commencement of the new and heavenly; so that all that Jesus of Nazareth had already done, the mighty changes which he had set in operation,—were an action upon the *former* of the two great ages; nor *would the latter be introduced till he returned from heaven*; to rule, for a period vast or even indefinite, as the personal vicegerent of God over his faithful children here. This event, which in our own days Millenarians are expecting soon, and which the early Christians expected sooner, was regarded as the true coming of the Messiah,—the point of demarcation between the ages,—the introduction of "the new heaven and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.† Meanwhile the old world was drawing to a close, of which a warning (like that given to Noah before the flood) ‡ had been given by the preliminary visit, with unmistakable credentials, of him who was to be the Messiah; he had come in the flesh, and retired in the spirit; and was leaving time for the tidings of his appointment and his approach to spread, by the voice of witnesses and

* See Acts iii. 19—21; xiii. 33—37; xxvi. 6—8. Hebrews ii. 5. Titus ii. 12,13. 1 Tim. iv. 1. James v. 3, 7, 8. 1 Cor. x. 11. Phil. iv. 5. 2 Thess. ii. 2.

† 2 Pet. iii. 13. ‡ 1 Pet. iii. 20.

preachers who published the pledges of his power. Of those pledges, which marked him out as the future prince of life and earth, none were so distinguished as his resurrection and ascension, by which God had given assurance that he would one day judge or rule the world in righteousness;* by which he was declared to be the son of God with power;† and on the very day of which he became the first-born or the begotten child of God;‡ and sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high.§ Invested with his office, he yet abstained from immediately coming to claim its prerogatives; he continued sequestered in the heavens, allowing to the world a time of preparation, a solemn pause before judgment;‖ repressing the impatient moment of the great revolution, and by his powerful word, bearing awhile and upholding all things as they are.¶ If this were really the conception of the apostles, it follows, no doubt, that they prematurely expected the return of their Lord; but that they did so, is no new assumption; and in adopting it I protect myself by the authority of Mr. Locke, who says in a note on a passage of the Epistle to the Romans, "It seems, by these two verses, as if St. Paul looked upon Christ's coming as not far off; to which there are several other occurrent passages in his epistles."**

If the foregoing interpretation of the introduction to this epistle be true, it follows that all the power and dignity there ascribed to Christ are described as *acquisition after his ascension;* that not till then was he accosted with the title of divinity previously applied to Solomon; not till then did he become greater than the angels, or receive an anointment of gladness above his fellows; not till then did he receive his heirship, his filiation, his vicegerency of God. Of his supreme Deity, scarcely could any more emphatic denial be conceived.††

* Acts xvii. 31. † Rom. i. 4.
‡ Acts xiii. 30—34. comp. Heb. i. 5. § Heb. i. 3.
‖ 2 Pet. iii. 9. ¶ Heb. i. 3.
** Paraphrase on the Epistles; Rom. xiii. 11, 12. Note.
†† From the word GOD, supposed to be addressed to Christ, in the clause "thy throne, O God, &c.," the Deity of our Lord, as *a second person in the Tri-*

(f.) The following passage is sometimes quoted as affirmative of the Deity of Christ: "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, in (or by) his Son Jesus Christ. *This* is *the true God*, and eternal life."* But it is surely evident that with Calvin, Newcome, Dr. Adam Clarke,† we must consider the concluding pair of clauses as parallel respectively with the two penultimates. "By him that is true," says the Apostle, "I mean the true God," "and this Jesus Christ is eternal life."‡ As to the pretence of over-nice grammarians, that the pronoun "*this*" must refer to Jesus Christ as the nearest antecedent, the Apostle John himself dismisses it with this one sentence: "Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. *This* (not Jesus Christ, it is to be presumed) is a deceiver and an antichrist."§ The antecedent, in this case, is not only *remote*, but *plural*.

(g.) I know of only one other set of passages requiring explanation from a Unitarian; and of these I take the following as an example; giving, you will observe, a translation slightly differing from the authorized version, but to which no competent judge will probably object:—"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, never thought his equality with God a thing to be eagerly retained; but divested himself of it, and took on him the form of a servant, and assumed the likeness of men; and being in the common condition of man, still humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, aye, and the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, &c."‖ Elsewhere Paul briefly expresses this sentiment thus: being rich, for your sakes he became poor.¶

nity, is inferred. Yet this word, in the original, is ELOHIM, whose plural form, we are told, is intended to prevent our thinking of only One Person, and which cannot mean less than *the whole Trinity*.

* 1 John v. 20. † Notes *in loc.* ‡ Newcome.
§ 2 John 7. ‖ Phil. ii. 5—8. ¶ 2 Cor. viii. 9.

Now, in order to appreciate the striking beauty of this passage, it is necessary to remember that the Apostle is writing to *Gentiles*; and to enter into his remarkable conception respecting the relation of the Messiah to them. This great object of promise was, according to the original idea of him, a mere national appropriation of the Jews; made their own by birth and lineage as well as by office. So long as these peculiarities belonged to him, *he could not*, without breaking through all the restraints of the sacred Mosaic law, stand in any friendly connection with the Gentiles; nor did our Lord, during his mortal life, ever extend his ministry beyond his native land. Moreover, there was nothing, Paul conceived, to prevent his realizing at once, had he willed it, all the splendid anticipations of the Hebrews; nothing to obstruct his seizing, from the hills of Galilee, or the heights of Jerusalem, the promised royal sceptre, and making himself, without delay, the Lord of all below; nothing but his holy resolve to be no mere Jewish Messiah, and his desire to embrace the Gentiles, too, within the blessings of his sway. And how could this be accomplished? *Never*, so long as the personal characteristics of the Israelite attached to him. He determined then to lay these aside, which could be done by death alone. On the cross, or in the ascension, he parted from the coil of mortality, in which were enveloped all the distinctions that made him national rather than human; the lineage, the blood, the locality, the alliance, passed away; the immortal spirit alone remained, and departed to the rest of God; and this his soul was not Hebrew, but was human; and so his relations expanded, and the princely Son of David became, through death, the divine Messiah of humanity. Writing then to Gentiles, the Apostle reminds them of this; tells them of what attainable splendours Jesus had deprived himself, what rightful glories he had resigned, what anguish he had endured, to what death he had submitted, in order to drop his mortal peculiarities which had excluded the nations

from the peace of his dominion, and to assume that spiritual state to which they might stand related. It was not his Godhead, not the application of his miracles to his personal advantage, but the dignities of the Prince of Israel, the prerogatives and triumphs of God's vicegerent, of which he emptied himself, and for the Gentiles' sakes became poor. He whose office made him as God, became, by his pure will, a servant; he who, without the slightest strain of his rights, might have assumed an equivalence to Providence on earth, and administered at once the promised theocracy of heaven, was in no eager haste to seize the privilege; but, that he might call in those who else had been the exile and the outcast people, entered first the shadow of suffering and shame; he who might have been exempt from death, took the humiliation of the cross; showing a divine and self-forgetful love, which disregards his own rights to pity others' privations; and which gave a resistless force to the exhortation, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."*

(h.) In direct contrast with this past humiliation of Christ, is the present glory and future dominion with which, in the verses immediately following, the Apostle describes him as invested by the rewarding complacency of God. And here the passage enters the same class with three others,† of which the introduction of the Epistle to the Hebrews is one, but the most remarkable is the following: "Christ,.... who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for by him were all things created, that are in Heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things

* See Note F.

† These texts naturally arrange themselves thus:

Philippians ii. 5—8. 2 Corinthians viii. 9.	condescension.	Phil. ii. 9—11. Eph. i. 20—23. Col. i. 15—19. Heb. i.	exaltation.

were created through him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have pre-eminence: for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." *

Calvin himself warns us that "the circumstances of this place require us to understand it as spoken," not of the original formation of the universe, but "of the renovation which is included in the benefit of Redemption."† Indeed a very superficial acquaintance with the phraseology of the Apostle, is sufficient to convince us that the language which we have here is *very unlike* that in which he speaks of the construction of the material system of things, and *very like* that in which he describes the regeneration of the world by the faith of Christ. Describing the natural creation, he makes no such strange selection of objects as thrones, principalities, dominions, powers, with unintelligible avoidance of every thing palpable; but says plainly, "The living God, who made Heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them."‡ And characterizing, on the other hand, the effects of the Gospel, he says, "We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works;"§ and "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things have passed away, behold all things have become new."‖ Nor does the language of this passage appear so violently figurative as commentators have usually supposed. Apply to it the Apostle's conception respecting the return of his Lord from Heaven, to reign visibly upon earth, over a community holy and immortal, and the obscurity will no longer be felt. That advent, introducing the future age or world to come, would be attended by a revolution which could be called no

* Col. i. 15—19. Comp. Eph. iii. 19; where the apostle desires that *the Ephesians* may "*be filled with all the fulness of God.*"

† Note *in loc.* ‡ Acts xiv. 15. § Eph. ii. 10. ‖ 2 Cor..v. 17.

less than a "new creation." No term less emphatic would adequately describe the superseding of all existing arrangements, the extinction of earthly rule, authority, and power;* the recal to earth of the spirits of the just;† the immortalizing of the saints who had not slept;‡ the gathering together the whole family of the holy in Heaven or earth;§ the everlasting destruction of the faithless from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power;‖ the bowing of every knee before the Prince of Life;¶ the opening of the kingdom that cannot be moved;** and the award of recompense to those who, having suffered, should reign with him.††

Already were the elements of this blessed society drawing themselves together, some in Heaven, others upon earth; the investiture with immortality had commenced. Christ was the beginning, the first-born from the dead: and the departed saints sharing his heavenly rest, and ready for the Lord to bring with him;‡‡ the afflicted Church below, in earnest expectation of the manifestation of those Sons of God, and, though waiting for the redemption of the body, yet risen together with Christ to that spiritual mind which is life and peace;§§ all these were kept by the power of God unto the salvation, which was ready to be revealed in the last time.‖‖ The multitude of the holy was thronging in, showing that no scant dominion was forming; but that it pleased the Father that, in his vicegerent, all fulness should dwell, and whatever is perfect be united. Lifted above the hostile reach of human might and dominion, above all mean comparison with earthly names of dignity, he sees all things already beneath his feet in the world as it is, and all things prospectively submissive in the world as it is to be.¶¶ Nor was Jesus, in his retirement above, unoccupied with the glories of his commission,

* 1 Cor. xv. 24.
† 1 Thess. iv. 14.
‡ 1 Cor. xv. 51. 1 Thess. iv. 17; v. 10.
§ Eph. i. 10.
‖ 2 Thess. i. 9.
¶ Heb. i. 6; Phil. ii. 10.
** Heb. xii. 28.
†† 2 Tim. ii. 12.
‡‡ 1 Thess. iv. 14.
§§ Rom. viii. 19, 23, 6.
‖‖ 1 Pet. i. 5.
¶¶ Eph. ii. 21, 22.

or indifferent to the recompense of his followers; rather is he preparing and allotting to the glorified there, and the toiling here, the privileges and powers of the everlasting age which shall take place of the thrones and principalities of this. Over both portions of the community of Saints, the seen and the unseen, the Heavenly and the earthly, he is the living head, and his spirit filleth all.*

This vision of the Advent, with all the magnificent ideas which gathered round it, seems to me to have given rise to the glorious "rapture" of this passage; to have thrown in, at first, its light and darkness, and when applied now to its interpretation, to disclose the dim outline of its plan. And though, in form, the anticipation itself was at least premature, in spirit it receives, in the providence of the Gospel, one prolonged fulfilment; and many of its accompanying conceptions realize themselves perpetually. Though as yet Christ comes not back to us, yet do the faithful go to him, and there, not here, are for ever with the Lord. Though with no visible sway he dwells on earth, he more and more rules it from afar; wins and blesses the hearts of its people, bends their wills, sends his image to be their conscience; and long has he had a might and name among us, far above our principalities and powers, and made the cross superior to the crown. And who can deny that he hath united in one the family in heaven and earth, compelled death to fasten innumerable ties of love between the kindred spheres, and trained our rejoicing sympathies to see in creation but one society of the good, whether they toil in service and exile here, or have joined the colony above of the emancipated sons of God.

What then is the result of our inquiry into the scriptural use of the word God? That it is once applied, by way of transference, to Christ, in a passage of whose honours Solomon was the first proprietor. The views of the writer, and the purpose of his letter, might make this secondary application

* Eph. ii. 23.

[redacted]

of the Hebrew poem right and useful. But now, how miserably barren must be that religion, how unspeakably poor that appreciation of Christ, which thinks to glorify him, by throwing around him the cast-off dignities of a Jewish prince! All these convulsive efforts to lift up the rank of Jesus, do but turn men from that greatness in him which is truly divine. And after all they utterly fail—except in turning into caricature the image of perfect holiness, and into a riddle the statement of the grandest truths: for the scanty evidence will not bear the strain that is put upon it. Nothing short of centuries of indoctrination could empower so small a testimony to sustain so enormous a scheme, and enable ecclesiastics, by sleight of words, to metamorphose the simplicity of the Bible into the contradictions of the Athanasian creed.

Our remaining criteria may be very briefly applied.

(3.) Our next demand from a Trinitarian Bible is this; that as there are three persons equally entitled to the name God, that word must never be *limited* to One of these, to the exclusion of the other two.

Yet do the Scriptures repeatedly restrict this title to the Father so positively, that no more emphatic language remains, by which it would be possible to exclude all other persons from the Godhead. If the texts we shall adduce of this class *do not* teach the personal unity of God, let it be stated what terms *would* teach it; or whether we are to consider it as a doctrine incapable of being revealed at all, however true in itself. Meanwhile, I would ask, whether the most skilful logician could propose a form of speech, closing the Godhead against all but the Father, more absolutely than these passages; "There is but One God, the FATHER."* "FATHER! . . . this is life eternal, to know THEE THE ONLY TRUE GOD, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."† "The *true worshippers* shall worship THE FATHER

* 1 Cor. viii. 6. † John xvii. 3.

in spirit and in truth; the Father seeketh such to worship him; GOD is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."* "There is ONE GOD AND FATHER OF ALL."†

If such passages as these do not deny the Deity of all persons but One, it must be because the word "Father" is used in them to denote the whole Trinity; and if this be so, then this name ceases to be distinctive of the first person in the Godhead; no discriminative title of that person remains; it becomes impossible for language to characterize him; and the whole mechanism of speech, by which alone a verbal revelation could disclose the distinctions in the divine nature, vanishes away. You must either confess the absence of the distinctions themselves, or show the presence of distinctive names.

(4.) Our next demand from a Trinitarian Bible would be this; that when the *persons* are named, by their distinctive Divine titles, their equality will be recognized, nor any one of them be represented as subordinate to another.

If an Athanasian received a divine commission to prepare a Gospel,—a statement of the essentials of Christianity,—for the use of some unevangelized nation, he would not, we may presume, habitually represent the Son, in his very highest offices, as inferior to the Father, as destitute of independent power, as without underived knowledge, and possessed only of a secondary and awarded glory. At all events, these representations would not be made without instant explanation; and the writer would accuse himself of rashly periling the mysteries of God, if he committed himself to such statements without guard or qualification, in broad unlimited propositions. Yet these are precisely the phenomena of Scripture. It is perpetually maintained by Trinitarians, that the miracles of Christ were acts of power, inexplicable except by proper Deity, united with his humanity;

* John iv. 23, 24. † Eph. iv. 6.

and that his superhuman wisdom was an expression of that Divine Nature which blended itself with his mortal constitution. If so, his miracles were wrought and his teachings dictated by that element of his personality which was God,—that is, by GOD THE SON;* but this, our Lord unequivocally denies; "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do;" "I can of mine own self do nothing."† "The words which I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works;"‡ "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father;"§ "The works which the Father hath given me to perform."‖ These passages declare, with all the precision of which language admits, that the wisdom and the might which dwelt in Christ, were not those of the Son, but those of the Father; the incarnate God had no concern with them, for they are ascribed exclusively to him who never became incarnate. Indeed we ask, and we ask in vain, for any one divine act or inspiration ascribed by our Lord to this humanized Deity with whom his mortal nature was united: his teachings are one prolonged declaration that the divinity that dwelleth within him was THE FATHER. If he felt within him a co-equal Godhead, how could he make the unqualified affirmation, "My Father is greater than all?"¶ Or can a more specific disclaimer of Omniscience be framed than this; "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the Angels who are in Heaven, NEITHER THE SON, but the

* This is the source to which our opponents in the present controversy have explicitly referred the divine wisdom of Christ. Mr. Jones says, "Unaided by the fulness of *the Godhead which dwelt within him bodily*," (did *the Father*, according to the Creeds, dwell in him bodily?) "his human soul was, necessarily, finite in its operations." And again, "Nor could he, as we have already intimated, know anything beyond the ken of a finite intelligence, except it were *revealed to him by the* ETERNAL WORD, with which he was mysteriously united." Christ says, "as MY FATHER *hath taught me*, I speak these things." Was his "*Father*" "the *eternal Word*?" —See *Lect. on the Proper Humanity, &c.* pp. 221, 243.

† John v. 19, 30. ‡ Ib. xiv. 10. § Ib. vi. 57.

‖ Ib. v. 36. ¶ Ib. x. 29.

Father?"* Dr. Adam Clarke, unable to resist this overpowering text, expresses his suspicion that it is not altogether genuine, and that the words, "neither the Son," should be expunged. It would appear that the temptations to "mutilation" are felt by other parties than the Editors of the Improved Version. If it be said, that in the passages which have been cited, the subordination alleged of Christ, refers to his human nature, and his mediatorial office, then it follows that his highest title may become the name of what is called his lowest capacity; and if this be so, no medium of verbal proof remains by which to establish any higher nature.† But can any supposition be more monstrous than this; that whenever our Lord used the familiar language of personality, and discoursed with the peasants of Galilee, and the populace of Jerusalem, he was perpetually performing a metaphysical resolution of himself into natures, characters, and offices, and putting forth, now a phrase from the divine, now another from the human capacity; here a sentence from the pre-existent, and there another from the mediatorial compartment of his individuality? And the absurdity is crowned, when writings, crowded thus with mental reservations, are handed over to us as a *Revelation.*

* Mark xiii. 32.

† With respect to the meaning of the name, "THE SON," our opponents appear to vary their statements in a way which serves the ends of controversy more than those of truth. Mr. Jones says that in the passages which I have adduced, the Trinitarian hypothesis "finds no hindrance whatever," because the word SON denotes in them our Lord's *human and Mediatorial* character. Mr. Bates denies that the word can have any such meaning. In defending the supreme Divinity of Christ, as well as of the Holy Spirit, from what is incorrectly called the Baptismal *Form*, ("baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,") he begs us to observe that it is *not into the name of Christ the Mediator* that converts are to be baptized. "Our Saviour's words," he affirms, "not only fail to sanction, but *expressly exclude*, such a construction; for he does not say, 'the name of the Father and of *myself*,' but 'of THE SON,' that is, of THE ETERNAL WORD." Mr. Bates's Lecture is not published; but he is aware that this statement is correct. Since this name "*the Son*" "expressly excludes" the Mediatorial character, and *must* mean the Eternal Word, may we ask Mr. Bates, how it is the Eternal Word did not know the day and the hour, and could do nothing of himself?—*Mr. Jones's Lect.* p. 242.

(5.) Our last expectation from a Trinitarian Bible is this; that, since with the incarnation began and ended the peculiar office of Christ's humanity, he will not be spoken of as man, in relation to events before or after this period.

The glory which our Lord is thought to have possessed before his entrance into this world, was the essential, underived, inalienable glory, which belonged to his Divinity; nor was his highest nature yet blended with the suffering elements, or capable of being described by the inferior titles, of his mediatorial office, or his mortal existence. Yet is it under the designation of SON OF MAN that he is described, according to the prevalent interpretation, as pre-existent; it is the SON OF MAN who "was before," in that state, whither he was to "ascend up again;"* it was, "He that came down from Heaven,—even the SON OF MAN, who is in Heaven."† Whatever doubt there may be respecting the precise import of this title, it certainly cannot be thought to denote the separate divine nature of Christ, as it existed before the incarnation. In perfect consistency with this language, it appears that for the restoration of this original glory, Jesus declares himself wholly dependent on the Father; "And now, O Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."‡ Here, if there be truth in the Trinitarian hypothesis, it was the man that prayed for a re-bestowal of that which the man never possessed, and which the God never lost or could receive from another. It must be admitted that no expression of dependence can be more solemn and absolute, than that which pours itself forth in prayer; and if our Lord was able to resume his former state, by the energy of his own Omnipotence, this act of supplication loses all semblance of sincerity. Yet, if here his dependence on the Father is acknowledged to be implied, with what consistency can another passage, relating also to

* John vi. 62. † Ib. iii. 13. ‡ John xvii. 5.

his departure from earth to Heaven, be seized upon to prove that he *raised himself* from the dead, by that *inextinguishable* and glorious power, which, nevertheless, he entreats the Father to restore? If his proper Deity brought back to life the crucified humanity, it was a mockery for his manhood to concern itself in prayer, for the restitution of the proper Deity. That his resurrection is not ascribed to inherent power of his own, is evident, not merely from the habitual language of the preachers of this great miracle, who declare without reserve that "this Jesus hath *God raised up*;" * nor from the words of Paul, who calls himself "an Apostle by Jesus Christ and *God the Father, who raised him from the dead*;"† but even from the very text (when read without curtailment) which is adduced to prove the contrary; "No man taketh it (my life) from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; *this commandment have I received of my Father*."‡ "The Messiah is privileged to be immortal; and my seeming fall by hostile hands will neither disprove my claim to the office, nor deprive it of this peculiar feature; my mission gives me a right to live, which will not be forfeited, though I exercise the right to die. Let no one think that my life is forced from me without consent of my own will; you can no more take it from me, than you can restore it to me. It is by the arrangement of the Father, whose will is also mine, that I take my Messianic immortality, not at once, but through a process of suffering and death."

If we pass forward, beyond the mortal life, to the final exaltation of Christ, he is still presented to us undivested of his humanity. Listen to the modern preachers of Orthodoxy, and they will tell you that the judicial capacity of the Saviour could be filled by Deity alone; that to pass judgment on an assembled world, to read the secrets of all hearts, and allot

* Acts ii. 32. † Gal. i. 1. ‡ John x. 18.

their final doom, are offices demanding nothing less than Omniscience, Omnipotence, Independence.* But from the Apostle Paul we learn, that "God will judge the world in righteousness by that MAN whom he hath ordained;"† and our Lord himself says, "I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear, I judge;"‡ "The Father hath given him authority to execute judgment also, BECAUSE HE IS THE SON OF MAN."§ Nor is it the presumption of heresy alone that esteems it possible for God to confer on a human being the requisites for so august an office; for it is Archbishop Tillotson who says, "We may promise to ourselves a fair and equal trial at the judgment of the Great Day, because we shall then be judged by a man like ourselves. Our Saviour and judge himself hath told us, that for this reason *God hath committed all judgment to the Son, because he is the Son of man.* And this in human judgments is accounted a great privilege, to be judged by those who are of the same rank and condition with ourselves, and who are likely to understand best, and most carefully to examine and consider all our circumstances, and to render our case as if it were their own. So equitably doth God deal with us, that we shall be acquitted or condemned by such a judge as, according to human measures, we ourselves should have chosen, by one in our own nature, who was made in all things like unto us, that only excepted which would have rendered him incapable of being our judge, because it would have made him a criminal like ourselves. And therefore the Apostle offers this as a firm ground of assurance to us that God will judge the world in righteousness, because

* Wardlaw's Discourses, iv. p. 117.

† Acts xvii. 31.

‡ John v. 30.

§ John v. 29. It is very difficult to determine whether this class of passages is rightly interpreted as referring to a final and collective judgment of mankind. The discussion of this point does not properly belong to our present subject; and the assumption, for the sake of brevity of argument, of the usual interpretation, does not imply assent to it.

that judgment shall be administered by a man like ourselves; He hath, saith he, appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained," &c.*

It is, then, in his humanity, that this high prerogative belongs to Jesus. Yet are our opponents right in their assertion that, if there be any office attributed to him, requiring divine perfection, it is this; no higher exaltation remains, no superior glory is referred to him, from which, with any better reason, we can conclude his equality with the Father. Human in this, he is human in all things.

Not one then of the proper characteristics of a Trinitarian Bible can be found in the Scriptures; and it is vain for the Athanasian system to claim their support. This conclusion can be subverted only in two ways; either by showing, that

* Tillotson's Sermons, xlvi. Lond. 1704. pp. 549, 550.

I am aware that the name of this admirable writer is not likely to have much weight with our opponents; for in speaking of Socinian writers he has indulged in a spirit of justice, which the modern Orthodoxy of his Church appears to consider altogether old-fashioned. The Archbishop gives the following character of the school which took its name from the Socini; "And yet to do right to the writers on that side, I must own, that generally they are a pattern of the fair way of disputing, and of debating matters of religion without heat and unseemly reflections upon their adversaries, in the number of whom I did not expect that the Primitive Fathers of the Christian Church would have been reckoned by them. They generally argue matters with that temper and gravity, and with that freedom from passion and transport, which becomes a serious and weighty argument; and for the most part they reason closely and clearly, with extraordinary guard and caution, with great dexterity and decency, and yet with smartness and subtilty enough; with a very gentle heat, and few hard words;—virtues to be praised wherever they are found, yea even in an enemy, and very worthy our imitation." Yet the Archbishop, as if aware that his candour might, by a very natural process, excite suspicion of his Orthodoxy, raises himself above imputation by adding, "In a word, they are the strongest managers of a weak cause, and which is ill-founded at the bottom, that perhaps ever yet meddled with controversy; insomuch that some of the Protestants, and the generality of the Popish writers, and even of the Jesuits themselves, who pretend to all the reason and subtilty in the world, are in comparison of them but mere scolds and bunglers; upon the whole matter, they have but this one great defect, that they want a good cause and truth on their side; which if they had, they have reason and wit and temper enough to defend it."—*Sermon* xliv. p. 591.

the criteria which I have laid down, for ascertaining the theology of the sacred writings, are unreasonable and incorrect; or by showing, that the application of them does not yield any of the results which I have stated. I say *any* of the results; for if *all the phenomena* which I have assumed as tests, would be necessary to give a Trinitarian complexion to the Scriptures, the absence of even a portion of them would decide the controversy against our opponents' scheme, whatever difficulties might remain to embarrass our own. If the *list of criteria* be thought materially wrong, let it be shown where and why; let it be explained how there can be a *verbal revelation* of "distinctions," without any distinctive names; how, without such discriminative words, we are to know, *unless we assume the whole doctrine to be proved*, when the human nature of Christ speaks, or is spoken of, when the divine; how the poor, who first had the gospel preached to them, ascertained this with the requisite degree of nicety; and above all, we would request to be furnished with a better set of criteria; and to be distinctly informed, *what scriptural phenomena would be required, in order to disprove the Trinitarian scheme.* If, on the other hand, I have erred in the *application* of my tests, let it be shown how far into the substance of the argument the error extends. I cannot hope that the exposition which I have given will be found free from mistake and inaccuracy; and let these be exposed with such severity as they may deserve. Only let it be remembered, that the real question is not about the skill of the advocate, but respecting the truth of the scheme; and when all the errors of the one have been cleared away, let it be still asked, in what condition stands the evidence of the other. I have purposely taken my principal station on the least favourable ground of the Unitarian argument; I have exhausted the strongest passages adduced against our theology: and I have done this the more readily, because these portions of scripture appear to possess an excellence and

beauty, which are obscured by their unresisted controversial repetition, and marred by the lacerations of Orthodoxy.

And may we not, without immodesty, ask any candid Trinitarian, are these passages so very plain and easy, are they so numerous, are our interpretations so irrational and ignorant, as to justify the imputation of deceit, of blasphemy, of wilful mutilation of the word of God, which we are condemned perpetually to hear? As to that excellent man, who on Wednesday last, treated in this way our most cherished convictions, and our most innocent actions, I have said nothing in reply to his accusations; for I well know them to have failed in benevolence, only from excess of mistaken piety. Had he a little more power of imagination, to put himself into the feelings and ideas of others, doubtless he would understand both his Bible and his fellow-disciples, better than he does. Meanwhile, I would not stir, with the breath of disrespect, one of his grey hairs; or by any severity of expostulation disturb the peace of an old age, so affectionate and good as his. He and we must ere long pass to a world, where the film will fall from the eye of error, and we shall know, even as we are known.*

In conclusion, then, I revert with freshened persuasion, to the statement with which I commenced. Jesus Christ of

* Mr. Stewart recommends to our imitation the conduct of a Jewish child who became anxious to pray, like his companions, to Jesus Christ; not, apparently, from any impulse of the affections, or any convictions of duty; but from a prudent desire to run no risk of offending any possible power. "When I go to heaven and see Jesus Christ, if he is God," calculates the boy "I shall be ashamed to look him in the face." Is it possible that this principle of making sure of one's self-interest without regard to sincerity and truth, can be published without a blush, from a Christian pulpit? And is Christ so little known as yet, that such hollow worship is thought to be a passport to his favour, instead of winning from him a rebuke that, in truth, must make ashamed? Is the Infinite hearer of prayer,—whatever be his name or names,—one who will turn away from a contrite and trustful supplication of the soul, unless his titles are all set right upon the lips? What then would become of the millions of entreaties and of cries that daily rise from the grieving earth to the blessed God? Impossible! 'twould make Heaven a vast Dead-letter Office, for returning petitions on account of a wrong address.

Nazareth, God hath presented to us simply in his inspired humanity. Him we accept, not indeed as very God, but as the true image of God, commissioned to show what no written doctrinal record could declare, the entire moral perfections of Deity. We accept,—not indeed his body, not the struggles of his sensitive nature, not the travail of his soul, but his purity, his tenderness, his absolute devotion to the great idea of right, his patient and compassionate warfare against misery and guilt, as the most distinct and beautiful expression of the Divine mind. The peculiar office of Christ is to supply a new *moral* image of Providence; and everything therefore except the *moral* complexion of his mind, we leave behind as human and historical merely, and apply to no religious use. I have already stated in what way nature and the gospel combine to bring before us the great object of our trust and worship. The universe gives us the scale of God, and Christ his Spirit. We climb to the Infinitude of his nature by the awful pathway of the stars, where whole forests of worlds silently quiver here and there, like a small leaf of light. We dive into his Eternity, through the ocean waves of Time, that roll and solemnly break on the imagination, as we trace the wrecks of departed things upon our present globe. The scope of his Intellect, and the majesty of his Rule, are seen in the tranquil order and everlasting silence that reign through the fields of his volition. And the Spirit that animates the whole is like that of the Prophet of Nazareth; the thoughts that fly upon the swift light throughout creation, charged with fates unnumbered, are like the healing mercies of One that passed no sorrow by. The government of this world, its mysterious allotments of good and ill, its successions of birth and death, its hopes of progress and of peace, each life of individual or nation, is under the administration of One, of whose rectitude and benevolence, whose sympathy with all the holiest aspirations of our virtue and

our love, Christ is the appointed emblem. A faith that spreads around and within the mind a Deity thus sublime and holy, feeds the light of every pure affection, and presses with Omnipotent power on the conscience; and our only prayer is, that we may walk as children of such light.

NOTES.

A.

On Impossibility, Physical and Logical.

In order to break the force of all reasonings respecting the inherent incredibility of the Trinitarian doctrine, the principle has been frequently advanced, that a statement which would be contradictory, if made respecting an object *within reach* of our knowledge, cannot be affirmed to be so, if applied to an object *beyond* our knowledge; since in the one case *we have*, in the other *we have not*, some experience to guide our judgment, and serve as a criterion of truth. Thus, it is said, to affirm of man, that his nature comprises more than one personality, might, without presumption, be pronounced a contradiction; because we are familiar with his constitution; but knowing nothing of the mode of God's existence, except what he is pleased to reveal, we cannot prove the same statement to be contradictory, when made respecting *his* essence.

This rule, like all the Trinitarian reasonings on this subject, derives its plausibility from an ambiguous use of terms. It has *one sense* in which it is true, but inapplicable to this subject; and *another*, in which it is applicable, but false. The rule is sound or unsound, according to the meaning which we assign to the word *contradiction*; a word which, in other arguments besides this, has made dupes of men's understandings. There are obviously two kinds of contradiction:—one relating to *questions of fact*, as when we say, it is contradictory to experience that ice should continue solid in the fire; the other, relating to questions of mere *thought*, as when we say, it is contradictory to affirm that force is inert, or that the diameters of a circle are unequal. The former of these suggests something *at variance with the established order of causes and effects*, and constitutes *a natural or physical* impossibility; the latter suggests a *combination of irreconcileable ideas*, constituting a *logical or metaphysical impossibility*, or more properly, a *self*-contradiction.

It is almost self-evident that, in order to pronounce upon a physical impossibility, we must possess *experience*, and have a knowledge of

the properties of objects and successions of events external to us; and that to pronounce on a metaphysical impossibility, we require only to have the ideas to which it refers; of the coincidence or incompatibility of which with each other, our own *consciousness* is the sole judge. When I deny that ice will remain frozen in the fire, I do so after frequent observation of the effect of heat in reducing bodies, especially water, from the solid to the liquid form; and in reliance on the intuitive expectation which all men entertain, of like results from like causes. Experience is the only justification of this denial; and *a priori*, no belief could be held on the subject; a person introduced for the first time to a piece of ice and to fire, could form no conjecture about the changes which would follow on their juxtaposition. And as our judgment in such cases has its origin, so does it find its limits, in experience; and should it be affirmed that, in a distant planet, ice did not melt on the application of fire, the right of denial would not extend to this statement, because our knowledge does not extend to the world to which the phenomenon is referred. The natural state of mind, on hearing such an announcement, might be expressed as follows; "If what you affirm be true, either some *new cause* must be called into operation, counteracting the result which else would follow; or, some of the causes existing here are withheld: the sequence, I am compelled to believe, would be the same, unless the antecedents were *somehow* different. Were the fact even a miracle, this would still be true; for the introduction of a new or different divine volition would be in itself a change in the previous causes. But I am not authorized to pronounce the alleged fact impossible; its variance from all the analogies of experience, justifies me in demanding extraordinary evidence in its favour; but I do not say that, in the infinite receptacle of causes unknown to the human understanding, there cannot exist any from which such an effect might arise."

There is then, I conceive, *no physical* impossibility, which might not be rendered credible by adequate evidence; there is nothing, in the constitution of our minds, to forbid its reception under certain conditions of proof sufficiently cogent. It simply violates an expectation which, though necessary and intuitive *before* the fact, is not incapable of correction *by* the fact; it presents two successive phenomena, dissimilar instead of similar; and between two occurrences, allocated on different points of time, however much analogy may fail, there can be no proper *contradiction*. The improbability that both should be true, may attain a force *almost*, but never altogether infinite; a

force, therefore, surmountable by a greater. The thoughts can at least entertain *the conception* of them both; nor is it more difficult to form the mental image of a piece of ice *unmelted* on the fire, than of the same substance melting away.

It is quite otherwise with a metaphysical impossibility or proper contradiction. The variance is, in this case, not between *successive phenomena*, but between *synchronous ideas*. We deny that the diameters of a circle are unequal, without experience, without measurement, and just as confidently respecting a circle in the remotest space, as respecting one before our eyes. As soon as we have the ideas of "circle," "diameter," "equality," this judgment necessarily follows. Our own consciousness makes us aware of the incompatibility between the idea expressed by the word "circle," and that expressed by the phrase "unequal diameters;" the former word being simply *the name of a curve having equal diameters*. The variance, in this case, is not between two external occurrences, but between two notions within our own minds; and simply *to have the notions* is to *perceive their disagreement*. It would be vain to urge upon us that, possibly, in regions of knowledge beyond our reach, circles with unequal diameters might exist: we should reply, that the words employed were merely the symbols of ideas in our consciousness, between which we *felt* agreement to be out of the question; that so long as the words meant what they now mean, this must continue to be the case; and that if there were any one, to whom the same sound of speech suggested a truth instead of a falsehood, this would only show, that the terms *did not stand for the same things* with him as with us. It will be observed that, in this case, we cannot even attain *any conception* of the thing affirmed; no mental image can be formed of a circle with unequal diameters; make the diameters unequal, and it is a circle no more.

A further analysis might, I believe, reduce more nearly under the same class a physical and a metaphysical impossibility; and might show that some of the language in which I have endeavoured to contrast them, is not strictly correct. But the main difference, which the present argument requires, (*viz.*, that no experience can reconcile the terms of a logical contradiction,) would only be brought out more clearly than ever. I am aware, for instance, that the distinction which I have drawn between my two examples.—that the latter deals with *ideas within us*, the former with facts without us,—does not penetrate to the roots of the question; that *external phenomena* are nothing to us,

till they become *internal*; nothing, except through the perceptions and notions we form of them; and that the variance therefore, even in the case of a physical impossibility, must lie between our own ideas. I may accordingly be reminded, that the notion of "melting with fire" is as essentially a part of our idea of "ice," as the notion of "equal diameters" is of our idea of a "circle;" so that the final appeal might, with as much reason, be made to our own consciousness in the one case as in the other. Might it not be said, "so long as the word ice retains its meaning, the proposition in question is a *self-contradiction*; for that word signifies a certain substance that *will* melt on the application of heat?" This is true; and resolves the distinction which I have endeavoured to explain into this form: the word "ice" may be kept open to modifications of meaning, the word "circle" cannot. And the reason is obvious. The idea of the material substance is a highly complex idea, comprising the notion of many *independent* properties, introduced to us through several of our senses: such as solidity, crystalline form, transparency, coldness, smoothness, whiteness, &c.; the quality of fusion by heat is only *one among many* of the ingredients composing the conception; and should this even be found to be accidental, and be withdrawn, the idea would still retain so vast a majority of its elements, that its identity would not be lost, nor its name undergo dismissal. But the notion of the circle is perfectly simple; being *wholly made up* of the idea of equal diameters, and of other properties *dependent* on this; so that if this be removed, the whole conception disappears, and nothing remains to be denoted by the word. Hence, a physical contradiction proposes to exclude from our notion of an object or event one out of many of its constituents,—an alteration perfectly akin to that which further experience itself often makes; a metaphysical contradiction denies of a term *all*, or the *essential part*, of the ideas attached to it. The materials for some sort of conception remain in the one case, vanish in the other.

Now the terms employed in the statement of the doctrine of the Trinity are *abstract* words; "person," "substance," "being:" and the numerical words "One" and "Three," are all names for very simple ideas; not indeed (except the two last) having the precision of quantitative and mathematical terms; but having none of that complexity which would allow them to *lose any meaning, and yet keep any;* to *change their sense without forfeiting their identity*. The ideas which we have of these words are as much within ourselves, and as

capable of comparison by our own consciousness, as the ideas belonging to the words *angle* and *triangle*; and when, on hearing the assertion that there are three persons in one mind or being, I proceed to compare them, I find the word "person" so far synonymous with the word "mind" or "being," that the self-contradiction would not be greater, were it affirmed that there are three angles in one γωνία—the mere form of speech being varied to hide the absurdity from eye and ear. To say that our ideas of the words are wrong, is vain; for the words were invented on purpose to denote these ideas: and if they are used to denote other ideas, which *we have not*, they are vacant sounds. To assert that higher beings perceive this proposition to be true, really amounts to this; that higher beings speak English, (or at all events not Hebrew, or Hellenistic Greek,) but have recast the meaning of these terms; and to say that we shall hereafter find them to be true, is to say that our vocabulary will undergo a revolution; and words used now to express one set of ideas, will hereafter express some other. Meanwhile, to our present minds all these future notions are nonentities; and using the words in question in the only sense they have, they declare a plain logical contradiction. Hence, every attempt to give consistency to the statement of the Trinity, has broken out into a heresy; and the Indwelling and the Swedenborgian schemes, the modal Trinity of Wallis and Whately, the tritheistic doctrine of Dr. W. Sherlock, are so many results of the rash propensity to seek for clear ideas in a form of unintelligible or contradictory speech. Σαφὴς ἔλεγχος ἀπιστίας τὸ πῶς περὶ Θεοῦ λέγειν.

B.

On the Hebrew Plural Elohim.

The perseverance with which this argument from the Hebrew plural is repeated, only proves the extent to which learning may be degraded into the service of a system. The use of a noun, plural in form, but singular in sense, and the subject of a singular verb, to denote the dignity of the person named by the noun, is known to be an idiom common to all the Semitic languages. Every one who can read a Hebrew Bible is aware that this peculiarity is not confined to the name of God; and that it occurs in many passages, which render absurd the inference deduced from it. For instance, from Ezek. xxix. 3, it would follow, that there is a plurality of natures or "distinctions" in the crocodile, the name of which is there found

in the plural, with a singular adjective and singular verb;—התנים הגדול הרבץ בתוך יאריו, "The great crocodile that lieth in the midst of his rivers." So in Gen. xxiv. 51, the plural form אדונים, Lord, so constantly used of a human individual, is applied to Abraham: ותהי אשה לבן אדוניך, "And she shall be a wife to the son of thy *masters*," *i. e.* thy *master* Abraham. It is unnecessary to multiply instances, which any Hebrew Concordance will supply in abundance. I subjoin one or two additional authorities from eminent Hebraists, whose theological impartiality is above suspicion.

Schroeder says: "Hebræi sermonis proprietas, quâ Pluralis, tam masculinus, quam femininus, usurpari potest de *und re*, quæ in suo genere magna est et quodammodo excellens; ut ימים, *maria*, pro *mari magno*; תנים, *dracones*, pro *dracone prægrandi*; אדונים, *domini*, pro *domino magno et potente*; אלהים, *numina*, pro *numine admodum colendo*; קדשים, *sancti*, pro *deo sanctissimo*; בהמות, *bestiæ*, pro *bestiâ grandi*, qualis est *elephas*; מכות *plagæ*, pro *plagâ gravi*; נהרות, *flumina*, pro *flumine magno*." N. G. Schroederi Institutiones ad fundamm. ling. Hebr. Reg. 100. not. i.

Simonis. "Plur. adhibetur de Deo vero; ad insinuandam, ut multis visum est, personarum divinarum pluralitatem; quod etiam alii, maxime Judæi, rectè negant: quoniam vel ibi in plurali ponitur, ubi ex mente Theologorum de unâ modo triadis sacræ personâ sermo est, velut Ps. xlv. 7, adeoque gentium unus aliquis deus pluraliter אלהים dicitur, ut Astarte 1 Reg. xi. 33; Baal muscarum et quidem is, qui Ekronæ colebatur 2 Reg. i. 2, 3. Denique sanctam triadem si אלהים significasset, multo notior usuque adeo linguæ quotidiano tritior sub prisco fœdere hæc doctrina fuisset, quam sub novo. Ex nostrâ sententiâ hic plur. indicio est, linguam Hebræam sub Polytheismo adolevisse; eo vero profligato plur. hic in sensum abiit majestatis et dignitatis." Eichhorn's Joh. Simonis' Lexicon Hebr. in verb. אלה, p. 120.

Buxtorf. אלהים, plurale pro singulari: Lex. Chaldaicum, Talmudicum et Rabbinicum: in verb.

Gesenius. אלהים *pluralis excellentiæ*: Gott, von der Einheit; wie בעלים, אדנים. Hebr. und Chald. Handwörterbuch: in verb.

Even Lewis Capel, in his defence of this verbal indication of the Trinity, admits the absurdity of using the argument with Anti-trinitarians: "Siquis ergo vellet adversus Judæos, Samosatenianos, alioesque sanctissimæ Trinitatis præfractos hostes, urgere hoc argumentum,

eoque uno et nudo uti, frustra omnino esset: ni prius demonstraret falsam esse quam illi causantur phraseos istius rationem, evinceretque eam in voce istâ אלהים locum habere non posse: *quod forte non usque adeo facile demonstrari posset.* Atque eatenus tantùm jure possunt suggillari Theologi, si argumento illo nudo, et solo, non aliâ ratione fulto, utantur ad Judæos et Samosatenianos coarguendos et convincendos; non vero si eo utantur ad piorum fidem jam ante aliunde stabilitam, porro augendam atque fovendam." Lud. Cappelli Critica Sacra. De nom. אלהים Diatriba. c. vii. Ed. 1650, p. 676.

May we ask of our learned opponents, *how long* the mysterious contents of this plural have been ascertained? Who was the discoverer, forgotten now by the ingratitude of Learning, but doubtless living still in the more faithful memory of Orthodoxy? And why those of the Christian Fathers, who devoted themselves to Hebrew literature, were not permitted to discern the Trinitarianism of the Israelitish syntax? They had not usually so dull an eye for verbal wonders.

The celebrated Brahmin, Rammohun Roy, whose knowledge of oriental languages can be as little disputed, I presume, as the singular greatness and simplicity of his mind, says: "It could scarcely be believed, if the fact were not too notorious, that such eminent scholars . . . could be liable to such a mistake, as to rely on this verse (Gen. i. 26. And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness,) as a ground of argument in support of the Trinity. It shows how easily prejudice, in favour of an already acquired opinion, gets the better of learning." And he proceeds to argue on "the idiom of the Hebrew, Arabic, and of almost all Asiatic languages, in which the plural number is often used for the singular to express the respect due to the person denoted by the noun." Rammohun Roy was, I believe, the first to call attention to the fact, obvious to any one who will read a few pages of the Koran, that Mohammed, whose belief in the strict personal Unity of the Divine Nature gave the leading feature to his religion, constantly represents God as speaking in these plural forms. I extract a few instances from Sale's Koran. Lond. 1734.

"God said; when *we* said unto the angels, worship Adam," &c.

"God said; and *we* said, O Adam, dwell thou," &c.—Ch. ii. p. 31.

"*We* formerly created man of a finer sort of clay; . . . and *we* have created over you seven heavens; and *we* are not negligent of what

we have created: and *we* send down rain from heaven by measure; and *we* cause it to remain on the earth," &c. "And *we* revealed *our* orders unto him, saying; . . . speak not unto *me* in behalf of those who have been unjust." "God will say, did ye think that *we* had created you in sport," &c.—Ch. xxiv. pp. 281, 282, 287.

In the very passages in which Mohammed condemns the doctrine of the Trinity, the same form abounds: "*We* have prepared for such of them as are unbelievers a painful punishment." "*We* have revealed our will unto thee." "*We* have given thee the Koran, as *we* gave the psalms to David." "O ye who have received the Scriptures, exceed not the just bounds in your religion; neither say of God any other than the truth. Verily Christ Jesus, the Son of Mary, is the apostle of God, and his Word, which he conveyed into Mary, and a spirit proceeding from him. Believe therefore in God and his apostles, and say not, There are three Gods: forbear this; it will be better for you. God is but one God. Far be it from him that he should have a Son! Unto him belongeth whatsoever is in heaven and on earth.—Ch. iv. pp. 80, 81.

C.

On the Prophecy of an "Immanuel."

For the interpretation which identifies "the Virgin" with the city of Jerusalem, I am indebted to Rammohun Roy, who has justified it by reasons which appear to me satisfactory. See his Second Appeal to the Christian Public. Appendix II. Calcutta, 1821. p. 128 seqq. The use of the definite article with the word (הָעַלְמָה) points out *the* Virgin as some *known object*, who would be recognised by King Ahaz, without further description. It will hardly be maintained that this prince was so familiar with evangelical futurities, as to understand the phrase of Mary of Nazareth. Nor does it seem at all likely that either the prophet's wife, or any other person not previously the subject of discourse, should be thus obscurely and abruptly described. But if "the Virgin" was a well-understood mode of speaking of Jerusalem, Ahaz would be at no loss to interpret the allusion. And that this metaphor was one of the common-places of Hebrew speech, in the time of the prophets, might be shown from every part of their writings. "Thou shalt be built, *O virgin of Israel*: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry."* "Then shall *the*

* Jer. xxxi. 4.

Virgin rejoice in the dance."* "The Lord hath trodden the Virgin, the daughter of Judah, as in a wine-press."† And Isaiah himself uses this expression respecting a foreign city: "Thou shalt no more rejoice, O thou oppressed Virgin, daughter of Sidon."‡ And expressing to the invader Sennacherib, the contempt which God authorised Jerusalem to entertain for his threats, he says, "*The Virgin*, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee and laughed thee to scorn."§

It should be remembered, however, that the establishment of this interpretation is by no means necessary to the proof of invalidity in the Trinitarian application of the prophecy. The reasons which I have adduced, together with the use in a neighbouring passage, of the phrase "over the breadth of *thy land*, O Immanuel,"‖ appear to me to point out some *prince* as the Virgin's Son. But many eminent interpreters consider him as only one of the Prophet's own children, "whom the Lord had given him, for signs and for wonders in Israel."¶ And the first four verses of the next chapter certainly speak of Isaiah's son in a manner so strikingly similar, as to give a strong support to this interpretation. But whatever obscurity there may be in the passage, the one clear certainty in it is this: that it does *not* refer to any person to be born seven or eight hundred years after the delivery of the prediction. And it is surely unworthy of any educated Theologian, possessing a full knowledge of the embarrassments attending the Trinitarian appeal to such texts, still to reiterate that appeal, without any specification of the mode in which he proposes to sustain it. Is it maintained that Jesus of Nazareth was the primary object of the prophecy? Or will any one be found deliberately to defend the hypothesis of a double sense? Or must we fear, that a lax and unscrupulous use is often made of allusions which sound well in the popular ear, without any distinct estimate of their real argumentative value?

It is no doubt convenient to cut the knot of every difficulty by the appeal to inspiration; to say, *e. g.*, that Matthew applies the word Emmanuel to Christ, and with a correctness which his infallibility forbids us to impeach. But are our opponents prepared to abide by this rule, to prove its truth, to apply it, without qualification, to the New Testament citations from the Hebrew Scriptures? Will they, for instance, find and expound, for the benefit of the church, the prophecy stated by Matthew to have been fulfilled in Jesus, "He

* Jer. xxxi. 13. † Lam. i. 15. ‡ Is. xxiii. 12.
§ 2 Kings xix. 21. ‖ Is. viii. 8. ¶ Is. viii. 18.

shall be called a Nazarene?"* The words are declared to have been "spoken by the prophets." But they are not discoverable in any of the canonical prophesies: so that *either* the Evangelist took them from some inspired work now lost,—in which case the canon is imperfect, and Christianity is deprived of the benefit of certain predictions intended for its support; *or*, he has cited them so incorrectly from our existing Scriptures, that the quotation cannot be identified. I cannot refrain from expressing my amazement, that those, whose constant duty it is to expound the New Testament writings should be conscious of no danger to their authority, when it is strained so far as to include an infallible interpretation of the Older Scriptures.

D.

On Isaiah ix. 6.

The translation of this passage is not unattended with difficulties: and many of the versions which learned men have proposed leave nothing on which the Trinitarian argument can rest. It is clear that divines ought to establish the meaning of the verse, before they reason from its theology. I subjoin a few of the most remarkable translations.

The Septuagint; "And his name shall be called 'Messenger of a great counsel;' for I will bring peace upon the rulers, and health to him."

The Targum of Jonathan; "And by the Wonderful in counsel, by the Mighty God who endureth for ever, his name shall be called the Messiah (the anointed), in whose days peace shall be multiplied upon us." The following allusion to the titles in this passage from Talmud Sanhedrim, 11 ch., will show to whom they were applied by Jewish commentators: "God said, let Hezekiah, who has five names, take vengeance on the king of Assyria, who has taken on himself five names also."

Grotius; "Wonderful; Counsellor of the Mighty God; Father of the future age; Prince of Peace."

Editor of Calmet; "Admirable, Counsellor, Divine Interpreter, Mighty, Father of Future time, Prince of Peace."

Bishop Lowth; "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Father of the everlasting age, the Prince of Peace."

Many other translations might be added: and even if the pro-

* Matt. ii. 23.

phecy were not obviously spoken of Hezekiah, we might reasonably ask, what doctrinal certainty can be found in so uncertain an announcement? And how is the fact accounted for that, important as it was to the apostles' success to make the largest possible use of their ancient scriptures, not one of them ever alludes to this prediction?

E.

On the Proem of John.

The objection which is most commonly entertained to the foregoing interpretation of the Proem of St. John's Gospel, arises from the ***strength and vividness*** of the personification of the Logos. A ***real personality*** it is said, must be assumed, in order to satisfy the terms of the description, which could never have been applied by the apostle to a mere mental creation.

I am by no means insensible to the force of this objection: though I think it of less weight than the difficulties which beset every other explanation. And it appears to be greatly relieved by two considerations; first, that a considerable part of the difficulty arises from a want of correspondence between the Greek and the English usage of language; secondly, that this personification did not originate with the apostle, but had become, by slow and definable gradations, an established formula of speech.

1. The first of these considerations I will introduce to my readers in the words of Archbishop Whately: "Our language possesses one remarkable advantage, with a view to this kind of Energy, in the constitution of its *genders*. All nouns in English, which express objects that are really neuter, are considered as strictly of the neuter gender; the Greek and Latin, though possessing the advantage (which is wanting in the languages derived from them) of having a neuter gender, yet lose the benefit of it, by fixing the masculine or feminine genders upon many nouns denoting things inanimate; whereas in English, when we speak of any such object in the masculine or feminine gender, that form of expression at once confers *personality* upon it. When 'Virtue,' *e. g.* or our 'Country' are spoken of as females, or 'Ocean' as a male, &c., they are, by that very circumstance, *personified*; and a stimulus is thus given to the imagination, from the very circumstance that in calm discussion or description, all of these would be neuter; whereas in Greek or Latin, as in French or Italian, no such distinction could be made. The

employment of '*Virtus*,' and 'Αρετὴ in the feminine gender, can contribute, accordingly, no animation to the style, when they could not, without a solecism, be employed otherwise." *

Now let any one read the English Proem of John, and ask himself, *how much* of the appearance of personality is due to the occurrence, again and again, of the pronouns "he," "him," "his," applied to the Logos; let him remember that *this much* is a mere imposition practised unavoidably upon him by the idiom of our language, and "*gives no animation to the style*" in the original; and I am persuaded that the violence of the personification will be tamed down to the apprehension of a very moderate imagination. It is true that the Logos does not, by this allowance, become impersonal; other parts of the personal conception remain, in the *acts* of creation and of illumination, attributed to this Divine Power: and hence the substitution of the neuter pronouns "it" and "its;" for the masculines "he," "him," "his," though useful, provisionally, for shaking off the English illusion to which I have referred, cannot be allowed to represent the sentiment of the passage faithfully.

There appears to be another peculiarity of our language and modes of thought, as contrasted with the Greek, which exaggerates, in the Common Translation, the force of the personification. The English language leaves to an author a free choice of either gender for his personifications: and the practical effect of this has been, that the *feminine* prosopopeia has been selected as most appropriate to abstract qualities and attributes of the mind; and although instances are not wanting of masculine representations of several of the human passions, the figure is felt, in such cases, to be much more vehement and more entirely beyond the limits of prose, than the employment of the other gender. What imagination would naturally think of Pity, of Fear, of Joy, of Genius, of Hope, as *male beings*? It may be doubted whether our most imaginative prose writers present any example of a male personification of an *attribute*: I can call to mind instances in the writings of Milton and Jeremy Taylor, of this figure so applied to certain *material objects*, as the Sun, the Ocean, but not to *abstract qualities or modes*, unless when a conception is borrowed (as of "Old Time") from the ancient mythology. And accordingly, to an English reader, such a style of representation must always appear forced and strange. But a writer in a language like the Greek

* Elements of Rhetoric, part iii. ch. ii. § 3.

cannot choose the sex of his personifications; it is decided for him, by the gender already assigned to the abstraction, about which he is occupied; and both he and his readers must accommodate their conceptions to this idiomatic necessity. In the German, the *Moon* is masculine; the *Sun* feminine; and every reader of that language knows the strange incongruities which, to English perceptions, this peculiarity introduces into its poetical imagery. For example, there is a German translation of Mrs. Barbauld's Hymns in prose; a passage of which, rendered literally into English would read thus: "I will show you what is glorious. The Sun is glorious. When She shineth in the clear sky, when She sitteth on the bright throne in the heavens, and looketh abroad over all the earth, She is the most excellent and glorious creature the eye can behold. The Sun is glorious; but He that made the Sun is more glorious than She." Again; "There is the Moon, bending His bright horns, like a silver bow, and shedding His mild light, like liquid silver, over the blue firmament." In the Greek literature, accordingly, the masculine personification of abstractions is as easy and common as the feminine; and the former occurs in many instances in which an English author, having free choice, would prefer the latter: thus in Homer, Fear is a son of Mars:

Οἷος δὲ βροτολοιγὸς Ἄρης πόλεμόνδε μέτεισι,
Τῷ δὲ φόβος, φίλος υἱὸς, ἅμα κρατερὸς καὶ ἀταρβὴς,
Ἔσπετο.*

But in Collins, a nymph:

"O Fear! . . . . . .
Thou who such weary lengths hast past,
Where wilt thou rest, mad nymph! at last?" †

And so in Coleridge:

"Black Horror screamed, and all her goblin rout
Diminish'd shrunk from the more withering scene." ‡

Pindar must make Envy a masculine power:

"Μὴ βαλέτω με λίθῳ τραχεῖ φθόνος." §

Coleridge describes thus the same feeling, giving itself speech:

". . . . . Shall Slander squatting near,
Spit her cold venom in a dead man's ear!" ||

* Il. xiii. 298. † Ode to Fear. ‡ Sonnet xii.
§ Olymp. viii. 73. || Juvenile Poems, p. 59.

And common as it is for English writers to give a feminine personification to Wisdom and Genius, Philo expressly says they are of the masculine gender (*τῆς ἄῤῥενας γενεᾶς νοῦς καὶ λογισμὸς*) * ; and the husband of the other faculties of the soul.

The divine attributes are, I think, uniformly represented by the pronoun *she*, in imaginative religious writers, like Bishop Taylor; mercy, justice, goodness, thus assume, in the works of that great man, the same form as Wisdom in the book of Proverbs; and it may be doubted whether, if the apostle John had written in the English language and with English feelings, the personification in his proem might not have presented itself in the same shape. Any one who will read over the passage, with this idea, will find, I think, that the figure, thus modified, appears by no means inconceivable. Have we not, in the peculiarity of our language to which I have alluded, one reason why English theologians appear to have felt more difficulty than foreign divines in seizing the true idea of the Logos; and why the disposition to consider it as an objective and absolute Person has been much more prevalent, among all parties here, than on the Continent?

2. But a more important consideration, for the understanding of this Proem, is this: that the Apostle is not the originator of the conception respecting the Logos, but simply adopted it in the shape, towards which it had been organizing itself for centuries. Three successive states of the idea can be traced: in the Old Testament, it appears (in Prov. viii.) as a mere transient personification of Divine Wisdom; in the Apocryphal Books of Ecclesiasticus and of Wisdom, it presents itself in a more permanent and mythical character; and, in the writings of Philo, it assumes so embodied and hypostatized a form, as to perplex the simplicity of his Monotheism. *From his writings, the whole Proem of his contemporary John (except where the Baptist and Jesus are mentioned by name) might be constructed.* This coincidence in phraseology so remarkable, cannot be considered as accidental. Is it thought impossible that John should say of an attribute of God, that it was with him from the first? We reply, Philo *does* say so; calling *Goodness* the most ancient of God's qualities; *Wisdom* older than the universe; Logos, the Assessor (*πάρεδρος* and *ὁπαδὸς*) of God prior to all creations, a needful companion of Deity, as the joint originator with him of all things.† And the Son

* De vict. p. 838. D.

Quod Deus sit immut. p. 309. A. De charit. p. 609. A. De Temul. p. 244. Leg. Alleg. p. 93. B.

of Sirach says, in his personification of Wisdom: "I am come out of the mouth of the most High, first-born before all creatures:" "He created me from the beginning, and before the world."* Is it said that such a statement is unworthy of Revelation? We reply, it occurs in the writings of Solomon: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old;" "then I was by him, as one brought up with him:"† where the feminine form (vv. 2, 3) totally excludes the idea of Wisdom being any thing more than a personification. Is it thought impossible that an attribute of God should be called the only-begotten Son of God? We turn to Philo, and find this same Logos entitled the most Ancient Son of God (*ὁ πρεσβύτατος υἱὸς θεοῦ*), the First-begotten (*ὁ πρωτόγονος*). Is it inconceivable that, through this transforming energy of God, those who received it should be said to become Sons of God? Philo says, "If you are not yet worthy to be denominated a Son of God, be earnest to put on the graces of his First-begotten Logos,—the most ancient angel, and, we may say, an archangel of various titles:" "for if we are not prepared to be esteemed children of God, we may at all events be thus related to the most Holy Logos, his eternal Image; for the most Ancient Logos is the Image of God."‡

As all Theological considerations, suggested by heretics, are apt to be dismissed with mere expressions of surprise and contempt, I am happy to refer, in confirmation of the foregoing views, in the most essential particulars, to an Orthodox Writer, whose accurate and various learning, and sound and grave judgment, have given him a merited pre-eminence among the Commentators on the Gospel of John. I allude to Professor Lücke, whose "Commentar über das Evangelium des Johannes" I have had the opportunity, since the delivery of this Lecture, of consulting. I wish that I could lay before my readers the whole of his admirable history of the rise and progress of the idea of the Logos; but I must content myself with translating a few brief extracts.§

"The origin and germ," he says, "of the theological Formula of

* Ecclesiasticus xxiv. 5, 12. † Prov. viii. 22, 30.

‡ *Κἂν μηδέπω μέντοι τυγχάνῃ τὶς ἀξιόχρεως ὢν υἱὸς θεοῦ προσαγορεύεσθαι, σπούδαζε κοσμεῖσθαι κατὰ τὸν πρωτόγονον αὐτοῦ λόγον, τὸν ἄγγελον πρεσβύτατον, ὡς ἀρχαγγέλον πολυώνυμον ὑπάρχοντα . . . . . Καὶ γὰρ εἰ μήπω ἱκανοὶ θεοῦ παῖδες νομίζεσθαι γεγόναμεν, ἀλλα τοι τῆς ἀϊδίου εἰκόνος αὐτοῦ λόγου τοῦ ἱερωτάτου. θεοῦ γὰρ εἰκὼν, λόγος ὁ πρεσβύτατος.* De conf. ling. p. 341. B. C.

§ I have an impression of having seen advertised an English translation of this work; but I have no means of ascertaining the fact.

the Logos, are furnished in the Canonical Hebrew Books (alluding to certain passages, especially Prov. viii. which he has been showing to be mere poetical personifications of Divine Attributes). It obtained its full development in the Jewish Theology, in the writings of the Alexandrine Philo. And, in an intermediate state of formation, we find it in the Greek Apocryphal books of the Old Testament."

Lücke examines the conception in all these stages; and, from his analysis of Philo's mode of thought, I extract the following:

"According to Philo, God, in his interior Essence, is inconceivable, occult, solitary (das absolute), self-comprised, and without relations to any other existence. . . Although the absolute cause of all that is, God cannot, in his own essence, and immediately, operate on the universe, either in the way of creation, preservation, or government. Concealed in his absolute separation, God is manifest and an object of knowledge in the world, only through his *Powers* (δυνάμεις): these, external forces of God in the universe, apart from his absolute essence, are the necessary media of his presence in the universe. . . .These divine δυνάμεις Philo calls sometimes *Ideas*, sometimes *Angels*, sometimes *Logoi*. This identification of notions, powers, ideas, angels, logoi, which is frequent in the writings of Philo, is of great importance for the right apprehension of his doctrine of the Divine Logos. This Logos he considers in a twofold relation. Sometimes he regards it as *inherent* (immanent), and refers it to him as a capacity (facultativ); when it is the Divine νοῦς, analogous to the human. But this attributive conception gives way to that of the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος, as a living, energetic δυνάμις, which tends to external action. Of this, Philo, in the spirit of Platonism, conceives as ἰδέα ἰδεῶν, the Ideal of things, the archetypal Idea, the pattern World, the νοητὸς κόσμος, which is extant in God as a reality, before all outward creations of the actual universe. In this sense the λόγος is the primary energy of God,—the ἔννοησις, the λογισμὸς θεοῦ λογιζομένου.

But, at the same time, the λόγος is also προφορικὸς; and, as a forming activity, goes forth out of God. But as this is only another relation of the Divine Logos, *viz.*, relation to the world, so is it the *product* of the former; yet essentially one with it, like the οἶκος of the inherent Logos,—as human speech is the resident point of the idea, its *form of manifestation*. All living, active relations of God to the world, all his objective manifestations, are comprised in this emanated Logos. He forms the world or creates it, imprinting himself

on matter as a Divine seal (σφραγὶς). And as he has created the world, (or otherwise, *God through* him, δι' αὐτοῦ,) so he preserves it; he is the indwelling and sustaining power; full of light and life, and filling every thing with Divine light and life. So in the *human world*, he is both the natural divine power of every soul, the pure intellect, the conscience; and the bestower of wisdom, and the watch of virtue. He is the same with the Wisdom of God, the Holy Spirit of God in his objective manifestation in the world; partly because animating and inspiring men, particularly in the capacity of Prophetic Spirit.

"Hence the Logos is the eldest Creation of God, the Eternal Father's eldest Son, God's Image, Mediator between God and the World, the Highest Angel, the Second God, the High-priest, the Reconciler, Intercessor for the World and Men, whose manifestation is especially visible in the history of the Jewish people."*

It ought to be added, that some able writers, as Grossman and Gfrörer, conceive that Philo invested his Logos with a real personality. The reasons for this opinion do not appear to me to be satisfactory. Even those who adopt it assign to this hypostasis a rank wholly subordinate, in Philo's estimation, to the Supreme God: and Lücke strenuously maintains that both the Alexandrine philosopher

* For the sake of brevity I have given rather an abstract than a translation. Commentar. üb. das Evang. des Johan. von Dr. Friedrich Lücke. Band. i. p. 232—p. 238. Bonn. 1833. It is possible that Professor Lücke's Orthodoxy, which, in conformity with the prevailing estimate of his countrymen, I have ventured to assume, may be called in question. It is always difficult to take the "regula fidei," recognized in one country, and apply it, with any exactitude, to the sentiments of another, especially when the one is remarkable for the hard and literal character of its theological conceptions; and the other, for the excessive refinements by which it has discriminated the shades of religious belief. If tried by the only German standard which has any near correspondence with English Evangelicism, I mean the severe school of Guerike, Tholuck, Hahn, Olshausen, Lücke would, no doubt, be pronounced deficient in the faith. But he belongs to the class which approaches most nearly to them, both in the interpretation of Scripture, and in the estimate of its authority. He does not, with them, refuse to compare the doctrines of Scripture with the conclusions of Reason, and insist that the authority of the former supersedes all recourse to the latter; but having ascertained first the *fact* and the *meaning* of Revelation, he then permits the comparison with philosophy, and declares their entire consistency. He thus belongs to the Scriptural section of what is called the Philosophical School of German Theology. He is decidedly Trinitarian and Anti-rationalist; and his orthodoxy has never been suspected, as has that of Schleiermacher, the father of his school. He was Professor of Theology in Göttingen before the recent political divisions in Hanover.

and the apostle John apply the name *God* to the Logos only in a figurative sense (ἐν καταχρήσει). He considers the clause "the Word was God," merely incidental, and unimportant compared with the preceding clause, "the Word was with God." "John," he observes, "sums up the purpose of the first verse in the words of the second; οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν. From his not taking up again the idea θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος, we must conclude, that he considered this position only an accessory. Thus the πρὸς τὸν θεόν is evidently to be the more prominently marked assertion." "John would say, the primeval Logos is πρὸς τὸν θεόν; that is, is in such communion with God, stands in such relation to him, that he may be called θεὸς. Looking at the historical connection between the mode of expression in Philo and in John, there is no room for doubt, that θεὸς is to be taken in the sense in which Philo applies the name θεὸς to the ποιητικὴ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ,—and explicitly calls the λόγος God,—ὁ δεύτερος θεός; but to prevent misunderstanding, expressly subjoins that this is only ἐν καταχρήσει. Though John, as we have seen, understands by the Logos a real Divine Person, he yet, as a Christian Apostle, held the monotheistic conception of God in a still higher degree, and an incomparably purer form (xvii. 3; 1 John v. 20.) than Philo: and are we then at liberty to suppose, that by him, less than by Philo, the position θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος is meant simply ἐν καταχρήσει? It is true that the substitution for θεὸς of the adjective θεῖος is at variance with the analogy of New Testament diction: but must we not, with the Alexandrine Fathers, especially Origen, conclude that θεὸς without the article, is to be taken as marking the difference between the indefinite sense of 'Divine nature,' and the definite, absolute, conception of God, expressed by ὁ θεός? Thus would John's θεὸς correspond with Paul's εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ. Such an accordance between the manner of Paul and of John is an advantage which must appear an equally desirable result of exegesis, whether we consider it in its dogmatical or its historical relations." *

From this extract it appears, that if the author does not approve of the old Socinian interpretation, which considers the Logos as synonymous from the first with Jesus Christ; it is not because he knows, that θεὸς in the predicate cannot signify *a* god; or slights Origen's opinion on the usage of N.T. and Hellenistic Greek. We have here an authority, than which no higher can be produced from among

* pp. 263, 266, 267.

[redacted]

the living or the dead, in favour of a meaning which, to the fastidious scholarship of Liverpool theologians, is absolutely intolerable. Lücke of course admits the general rule, respecting the omission of the article with the predicative noun; but he conceives (greatly to the horror, no doubt, of those whose soul resides in syntax) that the good old Apostle would even have committed a solecism in respect of a Greek article, for the sake of clearing a great truth in respect of God. "If there had been any intention to express the substantial unity of the Logos and God, we should have expected the Apostle to write ὁ θεὸς. On account of the equivocal meaning of θεὸς without the article, the article could not possibly have been absent."* It is vain to say that such corrupt Greek as this cannot be ascribed to the Apostles. Here are examples from John; ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία; † τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν ἡ ἀλήθεια: ‡ and here are others from Paul; ὁ κύριος τὸ πνεῦμα ἐστιν: § Παντὸς ἀνδρὸς ἡ κεφαλὴ ὁ Χριστός ἐστι.‖ Nay, we have an example in the following text, of a total inversion of the rule, the article being attached to the predicate, and *not* to the subject; εἰ ἔστι Κύριος (יהוה) ὁ Θεὸς.¶

It will be perceived by the text of this Lecture that I do not adopt the rendering of the Alexandrine Fathers; but I am anxious, in rejecting it, to pass no slight on the learning of those who maintain it; and to show that, out of England, orthodoxy can afford to be wise and just.

I think it right to add, that to the view which has been given of the Proem, an objection of some weight occurs in the twelfth verse. The clause "to them that believe on his name", presents the question, 'who is denoted by the pronoun *his*,—the Logos or Jesus Christ personally?' According to the interpretation which I have recommended, it should mean the former; according to the analogy of Scriptural diction, certainly the latter. Feeling the force of the difficulty, I yet think it less serious than those which attend every other hypothesis: and incline to think, that the clause is an anticipation of the personal introduction of the Incarnate Logos which immediately follows; a point of transition from the personification to the history.

In conclusion, may I take occasion to correct an erroneous state-

* p. 265. † 1 John iii. 4. ‡ 1 John v. 6.
§ 2 Cor. iii. 17. ‖ 1 Cor. xi. 3.
¶ 1 Kings xviii. 21. There would be no difficulty in increasing the number of instances exemplifying this solecism.

ment in Mr. Byrth's Lecture;—that Samuel Crell was a convert to Trinitarianism before his death. "He died," we are told, "a believer in the Supreme Divinity of Christ, and the efficacy of his atoning sacrifice."* I have before me the most authentic collection of Socinian Memoirs which has been published, by Dr. F. S. Bock, Greek Professor, and Royal Librarian at Königsberg. The work is principally from original sources; and the testimony of the following passage will probably be received as unimpeachable. It appears that a vague statement in the Hamburgh Literary News gave rise to the report of Crell's conversion: "Obiit Crellius Amstelodami, a. 1747. d. 12. Maii, anno æt. 87. In *novis litterariis Hamburg.* 1747, p. 703, narratur, quod circa vitæ finem errorum suorum ipsum pœnituerit, hujusque pœnitentiæ non simulatæ haud obscura dederit documenta, quod Paulo Burgero, Archidiacono Herspruccensi in iisdem novis publicis Hamb. 1748, p. 345. eam ob causam veri haud absimile videtur, quia sibi Amstelodami degenti Crellius, a. 1731, oretenus testatus fuerit, in colloquiis cum Celeb. Schaffio Lugdunensi institutis, quædam placita, jam sibi dubia reddita esse, adeo ut jam anceps circa eadem hæreat. Sed in iisdem novis 1749, p. 92, et p. 480. certiores reddimur: Crellium ad ultimum vitæ suæ halitum perstitisse Unitarium, quod etiam frater ipsius, Paulus, mihi coram pluribus vicibus testatus est."†

F.

In the rendering which I have given to this passage the word ἁρπαγμὸς is considered as equivalent to ἅρπαγμα. The interpretation, however, in no way requires this; and if it should be thought necessary to maintain the distinction between them, to which the analogy of Greek formation, in the case of verbal nouns, undoubtedly points, and to limit the former to the active sense of the "operation of seizing," the latter to the passive sense of "the object seized;" the general meaning will remain wholy unaffected. The only difference will be this; that the *whole* of the sixth verse must, in that case, be considered as descriptive of the rightful glory of Christ; and the transition to his voluntary afflictions will not commence till the 7th. The signification of this doubtful word simply determines, whether

* P. 157.

† Historia Antitrinitariorum, maximè Socinianismi et Socinianorum; Fred. Sam. Bock, Tom. I. P. i. pp. 167, 168.

the clause in which it stands shall be the last in the account of our Lord's dignity, or the first in the notice of his humiliation. The rendering, however, which I have adopted, is confirmed by the use made of this passage in the most ancient citation from this epistle. In the letter of the churches of Vienne and Lyons, the 6th verse is quoted, without the sequel, and the fact that Christ thought it not ἁρπαγμὸν to be equal with God, is adduced as an example of *humility*; "who showed themselves so far emulators and imitators of Christ; who being in the form of God thought not his equality with God, a thing to be eagerly seized."—Euseb. Eccl. Hist. Lib. V. § 2. Heinichen, vol. ii. p. 36.

With considerable variation of expression, the same idea occurs in the (1st) Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians. "Christ is theirs who are humble. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the sceptre of the majesty of God, came not in the show of pride and pre-eminence, though he could have done so; but in humility. Ye see, beloved, what is the model which has been given us." C. xvi. If the Trinitarian view of the mediatorial office of Christ be correct, it is not easy to perceive how he could have come in the show of pride and pre-eminence; had he not laid aside the glories of his Deity, and clothed himself with a suffering humanity, his mission, as commonly conceived, could have had no existence, nor any one purpose of it have been answered. But he might have been the great Hebrew Messiah, had he not chosen rather, by a process of suffering and death, to put himself into universal and spiritual relations to all men.

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THE

SCHEME OF VICARIOUS REDEMPTION

INCONSISTENT WITH ITSELF,

AND WITH

THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF SALVATION.

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN

PARADISE STREET CHAPEL,

LIVERPOOL,

ON TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 1839.

BY

REV. JAMES MARTINEAU.

BEING THE SIXTH OF A SERIES, TO BE DELIVERED WEEKLY, IN ANSWER TO A COURSE OF LECTURES AGAINST UNITARIANISM, IN CHRIST CHURCH, LIVERPOOL, BY THIRTEEN CLERGYMEN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

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PREFACE.

It will be apparent, from the unusual length of the following discourse, that its limits have been much extended since its delivery. The additional portions furnish, in detail, the interpretation which appears to me to reach the true meaning of the New Testament language, respecting the death of Christ. Few passages, I believe, relating to this subject, will be found unnoticed: and it is probable that, in the desire to avoid omission, I have been guilty of some prolixity and repetition.

The friendly diversity of opinion, which prevails among Unitarian Christians, is perhaps more considerable in reference to the subject of this Lecture, than to any other of the leading topics of theological belief. The reader will do justice to all parties, by bearing this in mind, while attending to the following pages; and by regarding every statement which he disapproves, as the mere expression of individual opinion.

It is impossible for me to leave unnoticed the charge of uncharitable violence and "vulgar personality," which Mr. M'Neile has preferred against me, on the ground of certain strong expressions, contained in my first Lecture, respecting the late Archbishop Magee. I readily acknowledge that the instances are rare, which can justify the language which I employed; and I would never employ such, did I not feel that it was not simply justified, but demanded. He must be an unworthy controversialist, who has no generous delight in admiring and respecting a doctrinal adversary; no concern and shame at the moral obliquities which prove an opponent wrong, without proving himself to be right. If Mr. M'Neile could enable me to look with his eyes of confidence and regard on "the illustrious Prelate," I should esteem it a privilege to recal every word which I have put on record respecting him. But a careful study of his Treatise on the Atonement, with the habit of *testing his citations*, has revealed to me a system of controversy which, before, I should have esteemed incredible; and which no terms of censure can too severely describe. Polemical discipline, it has been observed with too much truth, is, of all influences, the most dangerous to the moral sense.

It seems to have been thought wrong in me, by my respected opponents, to state my *general impression* of Archbishop Magee's controversial character, without justifying it by specific arguments. And so it would have been, if his work had really been "unanswered:" but every quality which I ascribed to it, has been shown to belong to it, by Dr. Carpenter; *his* work has received no reply; and surely a bystander may express a judgment on the merits of a controversy, and the polemical characters of its conductors, without the slightest obliga-

tion to lay open the contents of the discussion in self-justification. This appears to be Mr. Buddicom's opinion, if we may judge from the pungent sentence in which he has characterized, without proof, one of Mr. Harris's Discourses.* In the present publication, however, I have supplied the deficiency which is the subject of complaint; and have shown, not only that the late Archbishop of Dublin dealt in terms of insult, which, if spoken instead of written, no cultivated and Christian society would endure; but that, with a shocking eagerness to blast the character of his opponents, he corrupted the text of their writings, and drew his arguments from garbled quotations. If any one can convince me of mistake in what I have advanced, I shall most unfeignedly rejoice and retract. But till then I cannot qualify any expressions, however strong, which I have employed; for they are not the utterance of passion, but the measured language of conviction. Most unwillingly would I ever incur the risk of wounding "the feelings of the living," by animadversions on the character of the dead. But, surely, personal attachments to the man must not be allowed to silence all public estimate of the author; and against the attempt, on this ground, to hold me up as the assailant of private affections, and the insincere professor of charity, I protest, as cruel and unjust. It is not true that I attacked "the name and memory" rather than "the book," of the late Archbishop: the words which I used described nothing but his work: and that they were words of moral reprehension, arose necessarily from the nature of the complaint which we have to prefer against its contents. I do not understand the diplomatic arts by which a man may be analyzed into a plurality of characters, and permitted to do wrong in one capacity, while his reputation takes a quiet shelter among the rest: nor have I the ingenuity to rebuke falsehood in a book, yet save the veracity of the author. If the "outrage" consisted in publishing an impression, unsustained by evidence, I only fear, that the addition of the proof will be found to bring no mitigation of the pain.

Let me add, that I entirely acquit our Rev. opponents of any approbation of the controversial arts employed by the Prelate whom they defend. Their admiration of his book arises, I am aware, from ignorance of its real character; to understand which requires a much greater acquaintance with Unitarian literature than they appear, in any instance, to possess.

Lest it should be thought disrespectful in me to pass without notice the strictures on my last published Discourse, contained in the nth Lecture of the Trinitarian series, I will ask the indulgence of readers for a few moments more.

* Lecture, p. 450. Note.

Mr. Bates accuses me of making a mutilated quotation from Deut. xxix. 1—6. The whole passage stands thus; the part which I did not cite being included in brackets: ["1. These are the words of the covenant, which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb. 2. And] Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, [ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land; 3. The great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those great miracles: 4. Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day. 5. And] I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot. 6. Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine, or strong drink; that ye might know that *I am the Lord your God.*"

My object was to show, that, if no latitude is to be allowed in the application of mere grammatical principles of interpretation, we must admit "that Moses is called God with a distinctness which cannot be equalled in the case of Christ." For this purpose, I had no occasion to quote more than the 5th and 6th verses, containing the phrase, "I am the Lord your God;" the only question being, *who is the speaker, grammatically denoted by the first personal pronoun "I."* To make this evident, I went back to the opening of the sentence, which determined this point: "MOSES called together all Israel, AND SAID to them." The omitted clauses of his speech have no relation whatever to the matter in debate, and have no effect, but to *separate the parts*, without *altering the nature*, of the grammatical construction. So far from proving that Moses speaks, as if *personally identified* with the Lord, because teaching in his name, they prove just the reverse; for Jehovah is introduced in them in the *third person*, not the *first*; "ye have seen all that THE LORD (not 'I') did before your eyes," &c. The first verse I did not quote, because it seems to belong to the preceding chapter, and to have no reference to the words cited. The only delinquency in this matter which I have to confess is, that I wrote by mistake, "Moses called TOGETHER," instead of "UNTO, all Israel." Mr. Bates draws attention to this by Roman capitals, as if to hint at something very remarkable in the error. I can only say, that after repeated examination of the word "UNTO," I can discover no mysterious significance in it; if it be an orthodox tetragrammaton, my disregard of its claims was wholly inadvertent. As to the argument itself which this passage was adduced to enforce, I cannot perceive that it is in any way affected by the Lecturer's remarks: nor can any one reasonably doubt that if the New Testament had contained such a passage as this, "The Lord Jesus called unto the

multitudes and said, ... I have led you into a desert place, and fed you with the five loaves; that ye might know that I am the Lord your God;" Trinitarians would have appealed to it as a triumphant proof of the Deity of Christ, whatever number of clauses might have severed the beginning from the end of the sentence, and however often the name of the Lord, in the third person, might have occurred in the interval.

Nor have I been successful in discovering in what way I have misapprehended Mr. Bates's meaning respecting the word "SON," in the following verse; "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." I may doubtless have misstated his words; and if in his eyes the misstatement has any "serious inaccuracy," I sincerely regret its occurrence. Nothing but the constant habit of short-hand writing, enabling me to take verbatim reports of public addresses, would have given me confidence enough in my correctness, to found an argument on an unpublished verbal criticism. Even short-hand, however, being fallible, I relinquish the words: and the more willingly, because Mr. Bates's own report appears to me absolutely identical in meaning with my own. *He says*, that the baptism enjoined in the verse just cited cannot, so far as our Lord is concerned, be "baptism in the name of a Mediator;" "our Lord's words prevent such misapprehension: he says not 'In the name of the Father and in my name' (my mediatorial name); but 'In the name of the Father and of THE SON,'—the only begotten, co-essential, co-eternal, and co-equal, with the Father and the Holy Ghost." *I represented him as saying*, that our Saviour's words "*expressly exclude such a construction;* for he does not say, the name of the Father, and *of myself*, but of THE SON, that is the ETERNAL WORD." The difference between "preventing such misapprehension" and "excluding such construction" is not very obvious. I understand the argument to be, that there is something *in the form of expression in the second clause*, forbidding us to think of any thing less exalted than our Lord's Divine Nature; the only expression contained in the clause is "THE SON;" this term then, I imagined, was limited by the Lecturer to Christ's Divine Nature, and must have been replaced by some other phrase, if his mediatorial character had been the subject of discourse. In drawing a *general* conclusion from this *particular* statement, I only gave the Lecturer credit for understanding the bearing of his own argument; for of course, all reasoning *from the intrinsic force of an expression* must be co-extensive with the occurrence of that expression. If I have not correctly explained Mr. Bates's argument, it evades my apprehension altogether.

LECTURE VI.

THE SCHEME OF VICARIOUS REDEMPTION INCONSISTENT WITH ITSELF, AND WITH THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF SALVATION.

BY REV. JAMES MARTINEAU.

"NEITHER IS THERE SALVATION IN ANY OTHER; FOR THERE IS NONE OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN GIVEN AMONG MEN, WHEREBY WE MUST BE SAVED."—*Acts* iv. 12.

THE scene which we have this evening to visit and explore, is separated from us by the space of eighteen centuries; yet of nothing on this earth has Providence left, within the shadows of the past, so vivid and divine an image. Gently rising above the mighty "field of the world," Calvary's mournful hill appears, covered with silence now, but distinctly showing the heavenly light that struggled there through the stormiest elements of guilt. Nor need we only gaze, as on a motionless picture that closes the vista of Christian ages. Permitting history to take us by the hand, we may pace back in pilgrimage to the hour, till its groups stand around us, and pass by us, and its voices of passion and of grief mock and wail upon our ear. As we mingle with the crowd which, amid noise and dust, follows the condemned prisoners to the place of execution, and fix our eye on the faint and panting figure of one that bears his cross, could we but whisper to the sleek priests close by, how might we startle them, by telling them the future fate of this brief tragedy,—brief in act, in blessing everlasting; that this Gali-

lean convict shall be the world's confessed deliverer, while they that have brought him to this, shall be the scorn and by-word of the nations; that that vile instrument of torture, now so abject that it makes the dying slave more servile, shall be made, by this victim and this hour, the symbol of whatever is holy and sublime; the emblem of hope and love; pressed to the lips of ages; consecrated by a veneration which makes the sceptre seem trivial as an infant's toy. Meanwhile, the sacerdotal hypocrites, unconscious of the part they play, watch to the end the public murder which they have privately suborned; stealing a phrase from Scripture, that they may mock with holy lips; and leaving to the plebeian soldiers the mutual jest and brutal laugh, that serve to beguile the hired but hated work of agony, and that draw forth from the sufferer that burst of forgiving prayer, which sunk at least into their centurion's heart. One there is, who should have been spared the hearing of these scoffs; and perhaps she heard them not; for before his nature was exhausted more, his eye detects and his voice addresses her, and twines round her the filial arm of that disciple, who had been ever the most loving as well as most beloved. She at least lost the religion of that hour in its humanity, and beheld not the prophet but the son:—had not her own hands wrought that seamless robe for which the soldiers' lot is cast; and her own lips taught him that strain of sacred poetry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" but never had she thought to hear it *thus*. As the cries become fainter and fainter, scarcely do they reach Peter standing afar off. The last notice of him had been the rebuking look that sent him to weep bitterly; and now the voice that alone can tell him his forgiveness, will soon be gone! Broken hardly less, though without remorse, is the youthful John, to see that head, lately resting on his bosom, drooping passively in death; and to hear the involuntary shriek of Mary, as the spear struck upon the lifeless body, moving now only as it is moved;—whence he alone, on whom

she leaned, records the fact. Well might the Galilean friends stand at a distance gazing; unable to depart, yet not daring to approach; well might the multitudes that had cried "crucify him" in the morning, shudder at the thought of that clamour ere night; "beholding the things that had come to pass, they smote their breasts and returned."

This is the scene of which we have to seek the interpretation. Our first natural impression is, that it requires no interpretation, but speaks for itself; that it has no mystery, except that which belongs to the triumphs of deep guilt, and the sanctities of disinterested love. To raise our eye to that serene countenance, to listen to that submissive voice, to note the subjects of its utterance, would give us no idea of any mystic horror concealed behind the human features of the scene; of any invisible contortions, as from the lash of demons, in the soul of that holy victim; of any sympathetic connection of that cross with the bottomless pit on the one hand, and the highest Heaven on the other; of any moral revolution throughout our portion of the universe, of which this public execution is but the outward signal. The historians drop no hint that its sufferings, its affections, its relations, were other than human,—raised indeed to distinction by miraculous accompaniments; but intrinsically, however signally, human. They mention, as if bearing some appreciable proportion to the whole series of incidents, particulars so slight, as to vanish before any other than the obvious historical view of the transaction; the thirst, the sponge, the rent clothes, the mingled drink. They ascribe no sentiment to the crucified, except such as might be expressed by one of like nature with ourselves, in the consciousness of a finished work of duty, and a fidelity never broken under the strain of heaviest trial. The narrative is clearly the production of minds filled, not with theological anticipations, but with historical recollections.

With this view of Christ's death, which is such as might

be entertained by any of the primitive Churches, having one of the gospels only, without any of the epistles, we are content. I conceive of it, then, as manifesting the last degree of moral perfection in the Holy One of God; and believe, that in thus being an expression of character, it has its primary and everlasting value. I conceive of it as the needful preliminary to his resurrection and ascension, by which the severest difficulties in the theory of Providence, life, and duty, are alleviated or solved. I conceive of it as immediately procuring the universality and spirituality of the Gospel; by dissolving those corporeal ties which gave nationality to Jesus, and making him, in his heavenly and immortal form, the Messiah of humanity; blessing, sanctifying, regenerating, not a people from the centre of Jerusalem, but a world from his station in the Heavens. And these views, under unimportant modifications, I submit, are the only ones of which Scripture contains a trace.

All this, however, we are assured, is the mere outside aspect of the crucifixion; and wholly insignificant compared with the invisible character and relations of the scene; which, localized only on earth, has its chief effect in Hell; and though presenting itself among the occurrences of time, is a repeal of the decretals of Eternity. The being who hangs upon that cross is not man alone; but also the everlasting God, who created and upholds all things, even the sun that now darkens its face upon him, and the murderers who are waiting for his expiring cry. The anguish he endures, is not chiefly that, which falls so poignantly on the eye and ear of the spectator; the injured human affections, the dreadful momentary doubt; the pulses of physical torture, doubling on him with full or broken wave, till driven back by the overwhelming power of love disinterested and divine. But he is judicially abandoned by the Infinite Father; who expends on him the immeasurable wrath due to an apostate race, gathers up into an hour the lightnings of Eternity, and lets them

loose upon that bended head. It is the moment of retributive justice; the expiation of all human guilt: that open brow hides beneath it the despair of millions of men; and to the intensity of agony there, no human wail could give expression. Meanwhile, the future brightens on the Elect; the tempests that hung over their horizon are spent. The vengeance of the lawgiver having had its way, the sunshine of a Father's grace breaks forth, and lights up, with hope and beauty, the earth, which had been a desert of despair and sin. According to this theory, Christ, in his death, was a proper expiatory sacrifice; he turned aside, by enduring it for them, the infinite punishment of sin from all past or future believers in this efficacy of the cross; and transferred to them the natural rewards of his own righteousness. An acceptance of this doctrine is declared to be the prime condition of the divine forgiveness; for no one who does not *see* the pardon, can *have* it. And this pardon again, this clear score for the past, is a necessary preliminary to all sanctification; to all practical opening of a disinterested heart towards our Creator and man. Pardon, and the perception of it, are the needful preludes to that conforming love to God and men, which is the true Christian salvation.

The evidence in support of this theory is derived partly from natural appearances, partly from scriptural announcements. Involving, as it does, statements respecting the actual condition of human nature, and the world in which we live, some appeal to experience, and to the rational interpretation of life and Providence, is inevitable; and hence certain propositions, affecting to be of a philosophical character, are laid down as fundamental by the advocates of this system. Yet it is admitted, that direct revelation only could have acquainted us, either with our lost condition, or our vicarious recovery; and that all we can expect to accomplish with nature, is to harmonize what we observe there, with what we read in the written records of God's will; so that the main

stress of the argument rests on the interpretation of Scripture. The principles deduced from the nature of things, and laid down as a basis for this doctrine, may be thus represented:

That man needs a Redeemer; having obviously fallen, by some disaster, into a state of misery and guilt, from which the worst penal consequences must be apprehended; and were it not for the probability of such lapse from the condition in which it was fashioned, it would be impossible to reconcile the phenomena of the world with the justice and benevolence of its Creator.

That Deity only can redeem; since, to preserve veracity, the penalty of sin must be inflicted; and the diversion only, not the annihilation, of it, is possible. To let it fall on angels, would fail of the desired end; because human sin, having been directed against an infinite Being, has incurred an infinitude of punishment; which, on no created beings, could be exhausted in any period short of eternity. Only a nature strictly infinite can compress within itself, in the compass of an hour, the woes distributed over the immortality of mankind. Hence, were God personally One, like man, no redemption could be effected; for there would be no Deity to suffer, except the very One who must punish. But the triplicity of the Godhead relieves all difficulty; for, while one Infinite inflicts, another Infinite endures; and resources are furnished for the atonement.

Amid a great variety of forms in which the theory of atonement exists, I have selected the foregoing; which, if I understand aright, is that which is vindicated in the present controversy. I am not aware that I have added anything to the language in which it is stated by its powerful advocate, unless it be a few phrases, leaving its essential meaning the same, but needful to render it compact and clear.

The scriptural evidence is found principally in certain of the *apostolical epistles*; and this circumstance will render it neces-

sary to conduct a separate search into the historical writings of the New Testament, that we may ascertain how they express the corresponding set of ideas. Taking up successively these two branches of the subject, the natural and the biblical, I propose to show, first, that this doctrine is inconsistent with itself; secondly, that it is inconsistent with the Christian idea of Salvation.

I. It is inconsistent with itself.

(1.) In its manner of treating the principles of natural religion.

Our faith in the infinite benevolence of God is represented as destitute of adequate support from the testimony of nature.* It requires, we are assured, the suppression of a mass of appearances, that would scare it away in an instant, were it to venture into their presence; and is a dream of sickly and effeminate minds, whose belief is the inward growth of amiable sentimentality, rather than a genuine production from God's own facts. The appeal to the order and magnificence of creation, to the structures and relations of the inorganic, the vegetable, the animal, the spiritual forms, that fill the ascending ranks of this visible and conscious universe; —to the arrangements which make it a blessing to be born, far more than a suffering to die,—which enable us to extract the relish of life from its toils, the affections of our nature from its sufferings, the triumphs of goodness from its temptations;—to the seeming plan of general progress, which elicits truth by the self-destruction of error, and by the extinction of generations gives perpetual rejuveniscence to the world; this appeal, which is another name for the scheme of natural religion, is dismissed with scorn; and sin and sorrow and death are flung in defiance across our path;—barriers which we must remove, ere we can reach the presence of a benignant God. Come with us, it is said, and listen to the wail of the sick infant; look into the dingy haunts where

* See Note A.

poverty moans its life away; bend down your ear to the accursed hum that strays from the busy hives of guilt; spy into the hold of the slave-ship; from the factory follow the wasted child to the gin-shop first, and then to the cellar called its home; or look even at your own tempted and sin-bound souls, and your own perishing race, snatched off into the dark by handfuls through the activity of a destroying God; and tell us, did our benevolent Creator make a creature and a world like this? A Calvinist who puts this question is playing with fire. But I answer the question explicitly: all these things we have met steadily, and face to face; in full view of them, we have taken up our faith in the goodness of God; and in full view of them we will hold fast that faith. Nor is it just or true to affirm, that our system hides these evils, or that our practice refuses to grapple with them. And if you confess, that these ills of life would be too much for your natural piety; if you declare, that these rugged foundations and tempestuous elements of Providence would starve and crush your confidence in God, while ours strikes its roots in the rock, and throws out its branches to brave the storm, are you entitled to taunt us with a faith of puny growth? Meanwhile, we willingly assent to the principle which this appeal to evil is designed to establish; that, with much apparent order, there is some apparent disorder in the phenomena of the world: that from the latter, by itself, we should be unable to infer any goodness and benevolence in God; and that were not the former clearly the predominant result of natural laws, the character of the Great Cause of all things would be involved in agonizing gloom. The mass of physical and moral evil we do not profess fully to explain; we think that in no system whatever is there any approach to an explanation; and we are accustomed to touch on that dread subject with the humility of filial trust, not with the confidence of dogmatic elucidation.

Surely the fall of our first parents, I shall be reminded,

gives the requisite solution. The disaster which then befel the human race, has changed the primeval constitution of things; introduced mortality, and all the infirmities of which it is the result; introduced sin, and all the seeds of vile affections which it compels us to inherit; introduced also the penalties of sin, visible in part on this scene of life, and developing themselves in another in anguish everlasting. Fresh from the hand of his Creator, man was innocent, happy and holy; and he it is, not God, who has deformed the world with guilt and grief.

Now, *as a statement of fact*, all this may or may not be true. Of this I say nothing. But who does not see that, *as an explanation*, it is inconsistent with itself, partial in its application, and leaves matters incomparably worse than it found them? It is inconsistent with itself; for Adam, perfectly pure and holy as he is reputed to have been, gave the only proof that could exist of his being neither, by succumbing to the first temptation that came in his way; and though finding no enjoyment but in the contemplation of God, gave himself up to the first advances of the devil. Never surely was a reputation for sanctity so cheaply won. The canonizations of the Romish Calendar have been curiously bestowed, on beings sufficiently remote from just ideas of excellence; but, usually, there is *something* to be affirmed of them, legendary or otherwise, which, *if true*, might justify a momentary admiration. But our first parent was not laid even under this necessity, to obtain a glory greater than canonization; he had simply to do nothing, except to fall, in order to be esteemed the most perfectly holy of created minds. Most partial, too, is this theory in its application; for disease and hardship, and death unmerited as the infant's, afflict the lower animal creation. Is this, too, the result of the fall? If so, it is an *unredeemed* effect; if not, it presses on the benevolence of the Maker; and by the physical analogies which connect man with the inferior creatures, force on us the impression, that his corporeal sufferings have an original source not dissimilar from theirs.

And again, this explanation only serves to make matters worse than before. For how puerile is it to suppose, that men will rest satisfied with tracing back their ills to Adam, and refrain from asking, who was Adam's cause! And then comes upon us at once the ancient dilemma about evil; was it mistake, or was it malignity, that created so poor a creature as our progenitor, and staked on so precarious a will the blessedness of a race and the well-being of a world? So far, this theory, falsely and injuriously ascribed to Christianity, would leave us where we were: but it carries us into deeper and gratuitous difficulties, of which natural religion knows nothing, by appending eternal consequences to Adam's transgression; a large portion of which, after the most sanguine extension of the efficacy of the atonement, must remain unredeemed. So that if, under the eye of naturalism, the world, with its generations dropping into the grave, must appear (as we heard it recently described)* like the populous precincts of some castle, whose governor called his servants, after a brief indulgence of liberty and peace, into a dark and inscrutable dungeon, never to return or be seen again: the only new feature which this theory introduces into the prospect is this; that the interior of that cavernous prison-house is disclosed; and while a few of the departed are seen to have emerged into a fairer light, and to be traversing greener fields, and sharing a more blessed liberty than they knew before, the vast multitude are discerned in the gripe of everlasting chains, and the twist of unimaginable torture. And all this infliction is a penal consequence of a first ancestor's transgression! Singular spectacle to be offered in vindication of the character of God!

We are warned, however, not to start back from this representation, or to indulge in any rash expression at the view which it gives of the justice of the Most High; for that,

* *See Rev. H. M'Neile's Lecture; The Proper Deity of our Lord the only Ground of Consistency in the Work of Redemption*, pp. 339, 340.

beyond all doubt, parallel instances occur in the operations of nature; and that if the system deduced from Scripture accords with that which is in action in the creation, there arises a strong presumption that both are from the same Author. The arrangement which is the prime subject of objection in the foregoing theory, *viz.*, the vicarious transmission of consequences from acts of vice and virtue, is said to be familiar to our observation as a *fact*; and ought, therefore, to present no difficulties in the way of the admission of a *doctrine*. Is it not obvious, for example, that the guilt of a parent may entail disease and premature death on his child, or even remoter descendants? And if it be consistent with the divine perfections, that the innocent should suffer for others' sins at the distance of one generation, why not at the distance of a thousand? The guiltless victim is not more completely severed from identity with Adam, than he is from identity with his own father. My reply is brief: I admit both the fact and the analogy; but the fact is of the exceptional kind, from which, by itself, I could not infer the justice or the benevolence of the Creator; and which, were it of large and prevalent amount, I could not even reconcile with these perfections. If then you take it out of the list of exceptions and difficulties, and erect it into a cardinal rule, if you interpret by it the whole invisible portion of God's government, you turn the scale at once against the character of the Supreme, and plant creation under a tyrant's sway. And this is the fatal principle pervading all analogical arguments in defence of Trinitarian Christianity. No resemblances to the system can be found in the universe,except in those anomalies and seeming deformities which perplex the student of Providence, and which would undermine his faith, were they not lost in the vast spectacle of beauty and of good. These disorders are selected and spread out to view, as specimens of the divine government of nature; the mysteries and horrors which offend us in the popular theology are extended by their side; the comparison is

made, point by point, till the similitude is undeniably made out; and when the argument is closed, it amounts to this: do you doubt whether God could break mens' limbs? You mistake his strength of character; only see how he puts out their eyes! What kind of impression this reasoning may have, seems to me doubtful even to agony. Both Trinitarian theology and nature, it is triumphantly urged, must proceed from the same Author; aye, but what sort of Author is that? You have led me in your quest after analogies, through the great infirmary of God's creation; and so haunted am I by the sights and sounds of the lazar-house, that scarce can I believe in any thing but pestilence; so sick of soul have I become, that the mountain breeze has lost its scent of health; and you say, it is all the same in the other world, and wherever the same rule extends: then I know my fate, that in this Universe Justice has no throne. And thus, my friends, it comes to pass, that these reasoners often gain indeed their victory; but it is known only to the Searcher of Hearts, whether it is a victory against natural religion, or in favour of revealed. For this reason, I consider the "Analogy" of Bishop Butler (one of the profoundest of thinkers, and on purely moral subjects one of the justest too,) as containing, with a design directly contrary, the most terrible persuasives to Atheism that have ever been produced. The essential error consists in selecting the difficulties,—which are the rare, exceptional phenomena of nature,—as the basis of analogy and argument. In the comprehensive and generous study of Providence, the mind may, indeed, already have overcome the difficulties, and with the lights recently gained from the harmony, design, and order of creation, have made those shadows pass imperceptibly away; but when forced again into their very centre, compelled to adopt them as a fixed station and point of mental vision, they deepen round the heart again, and, instead of illustrating any thing, become solid darkness themselves.

I cannot quit this topic without observing, however, that

there appears to be nothing in nature and life, at all analogous to the vicarious principle attributed to God in the Trinitarian scheme of redemption. There is nowhere to be found any proper transfer or exchange, either of the qualities, or of the consequences, of vice and virtue. The good and evil acts of men do indeed affect others *as well* as themselves; the innocent suffer *with* the guilty, as in the case before adduced, of a child suffering in health by the excesses of a parent. But there is here no endurance *for* another, similar to Christ's alleged endurance in the place of men; the infliction on the child is not deducted from the parent; it does nothing to lighten his load, or make it less than it would have been, had he been without descendants; nor does any one suppose his guilt alleviated by the existence of this innocent fellow-sufferer. There is a nearer approach to analogy in those cases of crime, where the perpetrator seems to escape, and to leave the consequences of his act to descend on others; as when the successful cheat eludes pursuit, and from the stolen gains of neighbours constructs a life of luxury for himself; or when a spendthrift government, forgetful of its high trust, turning the professions of patriotism into a lie, is permitted to run a prosperous career for one generation, and is personally gone before the popular retribution falls, in the next, on innocent successors. Here no doubt the harmless suffer *by* the guilty, in a certain sense *in the place of* the guilty; but not in the sense which the analogy requires. For there is still no substitution; the distress of the unoffending party is not struck out of the offender's punishment; does not lessen, but rather aggravates his guilt; and instead of fitting him for pardon, tempts the natural sentiments of justice to follow him with severer condemnation. Nor does the scheme receive any better illustration from the fact, that whoever attempts the cure of misery must himself suffer; must have the shadows of ill cast upon his spirit from every sadness he alleviates; and interpose himself

to stay the plague which, in a world diseased, threatens to pass to the living from the dead. The parallel fails, because there is still no transference: the appropriate sufferings of sin are not given to the philanthropist; and the noble pains of goodness in him, the glorious strife of his self-sacrifice, are no part of the penal consequences of others' guilt; they do not cancel one iota of those consequences, or make the crimes which have demanded them, in any way, more ready for forgiveness. Indeed, it is not in the good man's *sufferings*, considered as such, that any efficacy resides; but in his *efforts*, which may be made with great sacrifice or without it, as the case may be. Nor, at best, is there any proper annihilation of consequences at all, accruing from his toils; the past acts of wrong which call up his resisting energies, are irrevocable, the guilt incurred, the penalty indestructible; the series of effects, foreign to the mind of the perpetrator, may be abbreviated; prevention applied to new ills which threaten to arise; but, by all this, the personal fitness of the delinquent for forgiveness is wholly unaffected; the volition of sin has gone forth; and on it, flies, as surely as sound on a vibration of the air, the verdict of judgment.

Those who are affected by slight and failing analogies like these, would do well to consider one, sufficiently obvious, which seems to throw doubt upon their scheme. The atonement is thought to be, in respect to all believers, a reversal of the fall: the effects of the fall are partly visible and temporal, partly invisible and eternal; linked, however, together as inseparable portions of the same penal system. Now it is evident, that the supposed redemption on the cross has left precisely where they were, all the *visible* effects of the first transgression: sorrow and toil are the lot of all, as they have been from of old; the baptized infant utters a cry as sad as the unbaptized; and between the holiness of the true believer and the worth *of the* devout heretic, there is not discernible such a differ-

ence, as there must have been between Adam pure and perfect, and Adam lapsed and lost. And is it presumptuous to reason from the seen to the unseen, from the part which we experience to that which we can only conceive? If the known effects are unredeemed, the suspicion is not unnatural, that so are the unknown.

I sum up, then, this part of my subject by observing, that besides many inconclusive appeals to nature, the advocates of the vicarious scheme are chargeable with this fundamental inconsistency. They appear to deny that the justice and benevolence of God can be reconciled with the phenomena of nature; and say that the evidence must be helped out by resort to their interpretation of scripture. When, having heard this auxiliary system, we protest that it renders the case sadder than before, they assure us that it is all benevolent and just, because it has its parallel in creation. They renounce and adopt, in the same breath, the religious appeal to the universe of God.

(2.) Another inconsistency appears, in the view which this theory gives of the character of God.

It is assumed that, at the æra of creation, the Maker of mankind had announced the infinite penalties, which must follow the violation of his law; and that their amount did not exceed the measure which his abhorrence of wrong required. "And that which he saith, he would not be God if he did not perform: that which he perceived right, he would be unworthy of our trust, did he not fulfil. His veracity and justice, therefore, were pledged to adhere to the word that had gone forth: and excluded the possibility of any free and unconditional forgiveness." Now I would note in passing, that this announcement to Adam of an eternal punishment impending over his first sin, is simply a fiction; for the warning to him is stated thus; "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die;"* from which our progenitor must have

* Gen. ii. 17.

been ingenious as a theologian, to extract the idea of endless life in Hell. But to say no more of this, what notions of veracity have we here? When a sentence is proclaimed against crime, is it indifferent to judicial truth, *upon whom* it falls? Personally addressed to the guilty, may it descend without a lie upon the guiltless? Provided there is the suffering, is it no matter *where*? Is this the sense in which God is no respecter of persons? Oh! what deplorable reflection of human artifice is this, that Heaven is too veracious to abandon its proclamation of menace against transgressors; yet is content to vent it on goodness the most perfect. No darker deed can be imagined, than is thus ascribed to the Source of all perfection, under the insulted names of truth and holiness. What reliance could we have on the faithfulness of such a Being? If it be consistent with his nature to *punish* by substitution, what security is there that he will not *reward* vicariously? All must be loose and unsettled, the sentiments of reverence confused, the perceptions of conscience indistinct, where the terms expressive of those great moral qualities which render God himself most venerable, are thus sported with and profaned.

The same extraordinary departure from all intelligible meaning of words is apparent, when our charge of vindictiveness against the doctrine of sacrifice is repelled as a slander. If the rigorous refusal of pardon, till the whole penalty has been inflicted (when, indeed, it is no pardon at all) be not vindictive, we may ask to be furnished with some better definition. And though it is said, that God's love was manifested to us by the gift of his Son, this does but change the object on which this quality is exercised, without removing the quality itself; putting *us* indeed into the sunshine of his grace, but *the Saviour* into the tempest of his wrath. Did we desire to sketch the most dreadful form of character, what more emphatic combination could we invent than this; rigour in the exaction of penal suffering; and indifference as to the *person on* whom it falls?

But in truth this system, in its delineations of the Great Ruler of creation, bids defiance to all the analogies by which Christ and the Christian heart have delighted to illustrate his nature. A God who could accept the spontaneously returning sinner, and restore him by corrective discipline, is pronounced not worth serving, and an object of contempt.* If so, Jesus sketched an object of contempt when he drew the father of the prodigal son, opening his

* "Either he" ("the Deity of the Unitarians") "must show no mercy, in order to continue true; or he must show no truth, in order to exercise mercy. If he overlook man's guilt, *admit him to the enjoyment of his favour, and proceed* by corrective discipline to restore his character, he unsettles the foundations of all equitable government, obliterates the everlasting distinctions between right and wrong, spreads consternation in heaven, and proclaims impunity in Hell. Such a God would not be worth serving. *Such* tenderness, instead of inspiring filial affection, would lead only to reckless contempt."—*Mr. M'Neile's Lecture*, p. 313.

Surely this is a description, not of the Unitarian, but of the Lecturer's own creed. It certainly is no part of his opponents' belief, that God first admits the guilty to his favour, and *then* "*proceeds*" "to restore his character." This arrangement, by which pardon *precedes* moral restoration, is that feature in the orthodox theory of the Divine dealings against which Unitarians protest, and which Mr. M'Neile himself insists upon as essential throughout his Lecture. "We think," he says, "that *before* man can be introduced to the only true process of improvement, he must *first* have forgiveness of his guilt." What is this "first" step, of pardon, but an "overlooking of man's guilt;" and what is the second, of "sanctification," but a "restoring of character;" whether we say by "corrective discipline," or the "influence of the Holy Spirit," matters not. Is it said that the guilt is not overlooked, if Christ endured its penalty? I ask again, whether justice regards only the *infliction* of suffering, or its *quantity*, without caring about its *direction*? Was it impossible for the stern righteousness of God freely to forgive the penitent? And how was the injustice of liberating the guilty mended by the torments of the innocent? Here is the verdict against sin,—"The soul that sinneth, it shall die." And how is this verdict executed? The soul that had sinned does *not* die; and one "that knew no sin" dies instead. And this is called a divine union of *truth* and *mercy*; being the most precise negation of both, of which any conception can be formed. First, to hang the destinies of all mankind upon a solitary volition of their first parents, and then let loose a diabolic power on that volition to break it down; to vitiate the human constitution in punishment for the fall, and yet continue to demand obedience to the original and perfect moral law; to assert the absolute inflexibility of that holy law, yet all the while have in view for the offenders a method of escape, which violates every one of its provisions, and makes it all a solemn pretence; to forgive that which is in itself unpardonable, on condition of the suicide of a God, is to shock and confound all

arms to the poor penitent, and needing only the sight of his misery to fall on his neck with the kiss of welcome home. Let the assertions be true, that sacrifice and satisfaction are needful preliminaries to pardon, that to pay any attention to repentance without these is mere weakness, and that it is a perilous deception to teach the doctrine of mercy apart from the atonement; and this parable of our Saviour's becomes the most pernicious instrument of delusion; a statement, absolute and unqualified, of a feeble and sentimental heresy. Who does not see what follows from this scornful exclusion of corrective punishment? Suppose the infliction not to be corrective, that is, not to be designed for any good, what then remains as the cause of the Divine retribution? The sense of insult offered to a law. And thus we are virtually told, that God must be regarded with a mixture of contempt, unless he be susceptible of personal affront.*

(3.) The last inconsistency with itself, which I shall point out in this doctrine, will be found in the view which it gives of the work of Christ. Sin, we are assured, is necessarily infinite. Its infinitude arises from its reference to an Infinite Being; and involves as a consequence the necessity of redemption by Deity himself.

The position, that guilt is to be estimated not by its amount or its motive, but by the dignity of the being against whom it is directed, is illustrated by the case of an insubordinate soldier, whose punishment is increased, according as his rebellion assails an equal, or any of the many grades amongst his superiors. It is evident, however, that it is not the dignity of the person, but the magnitude of the effect,

notions of rectitude, without affording even the sublimity of a savage grandeur. This will be called "blasphemy;" and it is so; but the blasphemy is not in the *words*, but in the *thing*.

Unitarians are falsely accused of representing God as "overlooking man's guilt." They hold, that *no guilt is overlooked till it is eradicated from the soul*; and that pardon proceeds, *pari passu*, with sanctification.

* See Note B.

which determines the severity of the sanction by which, in such an instance, law enforces order. Insult to a monarch is more sternly treated than injury to a subject, because it incurs the risk of wider and more disastrous consequences, and superadds to the personal injury a peril to an official power which, not resting on individual superiority, but on conventional arrangement, is always precarious. It is not indeed easy to form a distinct notion of an infinite act in a finite agent; and still less is it easy to evade the inference, that if an immoral deed against God be an infinite demerit, a moral deed towards him must be an infinite merit.

Passing by an assertion so unmeaning, and conceding it for the sake of progress in our argument, I would inquire what is intended by that other statement, that only Deity can redeem, and that by Deity the sacrifice was made? The union of the divine and human natures in Christ is said to have made his sufferings meritorious in an infinite degree. Yet we are repeatedly assured, that it was in his manhood only that he endured and died. If the divine nature in our Lord had a joint consciousness with the human, then did God suffer and perish; if not, then did the man only die, Deity being no more affected by his anguish, than by that of the malefactors on either side. In the one case, the perfections of God, in the other the reality of the atonement, must be relinquished. No doubt, the popular belief is, that the Creator literally expired; the hymns in common use declare it; the language of pulpits sanctions it; the consistency of creeds requires it; but professed theologians repudiate the idea with indignation. Yet by silence or ambiguous speech, they encourage, in those whom they are bound to enlighten, this degrading humanization of Deity; which renders it impossible for common minds to avoid ascribing to him emotions and infirmities, totally irreconcileable with the serene perfections of the Universal Mind. In his influence on the worshipper, *He* is no Spirit, who can be invoked by his agony

and bloody sweat, his cross and passion. And the piety that is thus taught to bring its incense, however sincere, before the mental image of a being with convulsed features and expiring cry, has little left of that which makes Christian devotion characteristically venerable.

II. I proceed to notice the inconsistency of the doctrine under review with the Christian idea of salvation.

There is one *significant scriptural fact*, which suggests to us the best mode of treating this part of our subject. It is this; that the language supposed to teach the atoning efficacy of the cross, does not appear in the New Testament till the Gentile controversy commences, nor ever occurs apart from the treatment of that subject, under some of its relations. The cause of this phenomenon will presently appear; meanwhile I state it, in the place of an assertion sometimes incorrectly made, viz., that the phraseology in question is confined to the epistles. Even this mechanical limitation of sacrificial passages is indeed nearly true, as not above three or four have strayed beyond the epistolary boundary, into the Gospels and the book of Acts: but the restriction in respect of subject, which I have stated, will be found, I believe, to be absolutely exact, and to furnish the real interpretation to the whole system of language.

(1.) Let us then first test the vicarious scheme by reference to the sentiments of Scripture generally, and of our Lord and his apostles especially, where this controversy is out of the way. Are their ideas respecting human character, the forgiveness of sin, the terms of everlasting life, accordant with the cardinal notions of a believer in the atonement? Do they, or do they not, insist on the necessity of a sacrifice for human sin, as a preliminary to pardon, to sanctification, to the love of God? Do they, or do they not, direct a marked and almost exclusive attention to the cross, as the object to which, far more than to the life and resurrection of our Lord, all faithful eyes should be directed?

(a.) Now to the fundamental assertion of the vicarious system, that the Deity cannot, without inconsistency and imperfection, pardon on simple repentance, the whole tenor of the Bible is one protracted and unequivocal contradiction. So copious is its testimony on this head, that if the passages containing it were removed, scarcely a shred of Scripture relating to the subject would remain. "Pardon, I beseech thee," said Moses, pleading for the Israelites, "the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now; and the Lord said, *I have pardoned according to thy word.*"* Will it be affirmed, that this chosen people had their eyes perpetually fixed in faith on the great propitiation, which was to close their dispensation, and of which their own ceremonial was a type?—that whenever penitence and pardon are named amongst them, this reference is implied, and that as this faith was called to mind and expressed in the shedding of blood at the altar, such sacrificial offerings take the place, in Judaism, of the atoning trust in Christianity? Well then, let us quit the chosen nation altogether, and go to a heathen people, who were aliens to their laws, their blood, their hopes, and their religion; to whom no sacrifice was appointed, and no Messiah promised. If we can discover the dealings of God with such a people, the case, I presume, must be deemed conclusive. Hear then what happened on the banks of the Tigris. "Jonah began to enter into the city," (Nineveh,) "and he cried and said, yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown. So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even unto the least of them." "Who can tell," (said the decree of the king ordaining the fast,) "if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he

* Numb. xiv. 19, 20.

had said he would do unto them; and he did it not."* And when the prophet was offended, first at this clemency to Nineveh, and afterwards that the canker was sent to destroy his own favourite plant, beneath whose shadow he sat, what did Jehovah say? "Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night and perished in a night; and should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six-score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand?"†—and who are not likely, one would think, to have discerned the future merits of the Redeemer.

In truth, if even the Israelites had any such prospective views to Calvary, if their sacrifices conveyed the idea of the cross erected there, and were established for this purpose, the fact must have been privately revealed to modern theologians; for not a trace of it can be found in the Hebrew writings. It must be thought strange, that a prophetic reference so habitual, should be always a secret reference; that a faith so fundamental should be so mysteriously suppressed; that the uppermost idea of a nation's mind should never have found its way to lips or pen. "But if it were not so," we are reminded, "if the Jewish ritual prefigured nothing ulterior, it was revolting, trifling, savage; its worship a butchery, and the temple courts no better than a slaughter house." And were they not equally so, though the theory of types be true? If neither priest nor people could *see at the time* the very thing which the ceremonial was constructed to reveal, what advantage is it that divines can see it *now*? And even if the notion was conveyed to the Jewish mind, (which the whole history shows not to have been the fact,) was it necessary that hecatombs should be slain, age after age, to intimate obscurely an idea, which one brief sentence might have lucidly expressed? The idea, however, it is evident, slipped

* Jon. iii. 5—10. † Jon. iv. 10, 11.

through after all; for when Messiah actually came, the one great thing which the Jews did *not* know and believe about him was, that he could die at all. So much for the preparatory discipline of fifteen centuries!

There is no reason then why any thing should be supplied in our thoughts, to alter the plain meaning of the announcements of prophets and holy men, of God's unconditional forgiveness on repentance. "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt offering; the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."* "Wash you, make you clean," says the prophet Isaiah in the name of the Lord; "put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."† Once more, "When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die."‡ Nor are the teachings of the Gospel at all less explicit. Our Lord treats largely and expressly on the doctrine of forgiveness in several parables, and especially that of the prodigal son; and omits all allusion to the propitiation for the past. He furnishes an express definition of the terms of eternal life; "Good master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, why callest thou me good; there is none good save one, that is God; but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." And Jesus adds, "if thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."§

* Ps. li. 16, 17. † Is. i. 16—18. ‡ Ezek. xxxiii. 14—16. § Matt. xix. 16—21.

This silence on the prime condition of pardon cannot be explained by the fact, that the crucifixion had not yet taken place, and could not safely be alluded to, before the course of events had brought it into prominent notice. For we have the preaching of the Apostles, after the ascension, recorded at great length, and under very various circumstances, in the book of Acts. We have the very "words whereby," according to the testimony of an angel, "Cornelius and all his house shall be saved;" these, one would think, would be worth hearing in this cause: "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree; him God raised up the third day, and showed openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify, that it is he who was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that, through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."* Did an Evangelical missionary dare to preach in this style now, he would be immediately disowned by his employers, and dismissed as a disguised Socinian, who kept back all the "peculiar doctrines of the Gospel."

(b.) The emphatic mention of the resurrection by the apostle Peter in this address, is only a particular instance of a system which pervades the whole preaching of the first missionaries of Christ. *This*, and not the cross, with its supposed effects, is the grand object to which they call the attention and the faith of their hearers. I cannot quote to you

* Acts x. 34—44.

the whole book of Acts; but every reader knows, that "Jesus and the resurrection" constitutes the leading theme, the central combination of ideas in all its discourses. This truth was shed, from Peter's tongue of fire, on the multitudes that heard amazed the inspiration of the day of Pentecost.* Again, it was his text, when passing beneath the beautiful gate, he made the cripple leap for joy; and then, with the flush of this deed still fresh upon him, leaned against a pillar in Solomon's porch, and spake in explanation to the awe-struck people, thronging in at the hour of prayer.† Before priests and rulers, before Sanhedrim and populace, the same tale is told again, to the utter exclusion, be it observed, of the essential doctrine of the cross.‡ The authorities of the temple, we are told, were galled and terrified at the apostle's preaching; "naturally enough," it will be said, "since, the real sacrifice having been offered, their vocation, which was to make the prefatory and typical oblation, was threatened with destruction." But no, this is not the reason given: "They were grieved because they preached, through Jesus, the resurrection from the dead."§ Paul, too, while his preaching was spontaneous and free, and until he had to argue certain controversies which have long ago become obsolete, manifested a no less remarkable predilection for this topic. Before Felix, he declares what was the grand indictment of his countrymen against him; "touching the resurrection of the dead, I am called in question of you this day."‖ Follow him far away from his own land; and, with foreigners, he harps upon the same subject, as if he were a man of one idea; which, indeed, according to our opponents' scheme, he ought to have been, only it should have been *another idea*. Seldom, however, can we meet with a more exuberant mind than Paul's; yet the resurrection obviously haunts him wherever he goes: in the synagogue of Antioch, you hear

* Acts ii. 24. † iii. 15. ‡ iv. 10; v. 30.
§ iv. 2. ‖ xxiv. 21.

him dwelling on it with all the energy of his inspiration;* and, at Athens, it was this on which the scepticism of Epicureans and Stoics fastened for a scoff.† In his epistles, too, where he enlarges so much on justification by faith, when we inquire what precisely is this faith, and what the object it is to contemplate and embrace, this remarkable fact presents itself: that the one only important thing respecting Christ, which is *never once* mentioned as the object of justifying faith, is *his death, and blood, and cross.* "Faith" by itself, the "faith of Jesus Christ," "faith of the Gospel," "faith of the Son of God," are expressions of constant occurrence; and wherever this general description is replaced by a more specific account of this justifying state of mind, it is *faith in the resurrection* on which attention is fastened. "It is Christ that died, *yea rather, that is risen again.*"‡ "He was delivered for our offences, and *raised again for our justification.*"§ "Faith shall be imputed to us for righteousness, if we believe on *him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.*"‖ Hear, too, the Apostle's definition of saving faith: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart *that God hath raised him from the dead,* thou shalt be saved."¶ The only instance, in which the writings of St. Paul appear to associate the word faith with the death of Christ, is the following text: "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood;"** and in this case the Apostle's meaning would, I conceive, be more faithfully given by destroying this conjunction, and disposing the words thus: "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation by his blood, through faith." The idea of his *blood,* or *death,* belongs to the word propitiation, not to the word faith. To this translation no Trinitarian scholar, I am persuaded, can object;†† and when the true meaning of the writer's sacrificial

* Acts xiii. 30. † xvii. 18, 31. ‡ Rom. viii. 34. § iv. 25.
‖ iv. 24. ¶ x. 9. ** iii. 25.

†† Mr. Buddicom has the following note, intimating his approbation of this rendering: "Some of the best commentators have connected ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι, not

language is explained, the distinction will appear to be not unimportant. At present I am concerned only with the defence of my position, that the death of Christ is never mentioned as the object of saving faith; but that his resurrection unquestionably is. This phenomenon in Scripture phraseology is so extraordinary, so utterly repugnant to every thing which a hearer of orthodox preaching would expect, that I hardly expect my affirmation of it to be believed. The two ideas of *faith*, and of our *Lord's death*, are so naturally and perpetually united in the mind of every believer in the atonement, that it must appear to him incredible, that they should never fall together in the writings of the apostles. However, I have stated my fact; and it is for you to bring it to the test of Scripture.

(c.) Independently of all written testimony, moral reasons, we are assured, exist, which render an absolute remission for the past essential to a regenerated life for the future. Our human nature is said to be so constituted, that the burden of sin, on the conscience once awakened, is intolerable; our spirit cries aloud for mercy; yet is so straitened by the bands of sin, so conscious of the sad alliance lingering still, so full of hesitancy and shame when seeking the relief of prayer, so blinded by its tears when scanning the heavens for an opening of light and hope, that there is no freedom, no unrestrained and happy love to God; but a pinched and anxious mind, bereft of power, striving to work with bandaged or paralytic will, instead of trusting itself to loosened and self-oblivious affections. Hence it is thought, that the sin of the past must be cancelled, before the holiness of the future can be commenced; that it is a false order to represent repentance as leading to pardon; because, to be forgiven, is the pre-requisite to love. We cannot forget, how-

with διὰ τῆς πίστεως, but with ἱλαστήριον· and, accordingly, Bishop Bull renders the passage, 'Quem proposuit Deus placamentum in sanguine suo per fidem.'"—*Lecture on Atonement*, p. 496.

ever, how distinctly and emphatically he who, after God, best knew what is in man, has contradicted this sentiment; for when that sinful woman, whose presence in the house shocked the sanctimonious Pharisee, stood at his feet as he reclined, washing them with her tears, and kissing them with reverential lips, Jesus turned to her and said, "her sins, which are many, are forgiven; *for* she loved much."* From him, then, we learn what our own hearts would almost teach, that love may be the prelude to forgiveness, as well as forgiveness the preparative for love.

At the same time let me acknowledge, that this statement respecting the moral effects of conscious pardon, to which I have invoked Jesus to reply, is by no means an unmixed error. It touches upon a very profound and important truth; and I can never bring myself to regard that assurance of divine forgiveness, which the doctrine of atonement imparts, as a demoralizing state of mind, encouraging laxity of conscience and a continuance in sin. The sense of pardon doubtless reaches the secret springs of gratitude, presents the soul with an object, strange before, of new and divine affection; and binds the child of redemption, by all generous and filial obligations, to serve with free and willing heart the God who hath gone forth to meet him. That the motives of self-interest are diminished in such a case, is a trifle that need occasion small anxiety. For the human heart is no labourer for hire; and, where there is opportunity afforded for true and noble love, will thrust away the proffered wages, and toil rather in a free and thankful spirit. If we are to compare, as a source of duty, the grateful with the merely prudential temper, rather may we trust the first, as not the worthier only, but the stronger too; and till we obtain emancipation from the latter,—forget the computations of hope and fear, and precipitate ourselves for better for worse on some object

* Luke vii. 47.

of divine love and trust,—our nature will be puny and weak, our wills will turn in sickness from their duty, and our affections shrink in aversion from their heaven. But though personal gratitude is better than prudence, there is a higher service still. A more disinterested love may spring from the contemplation of what God is in himself, than from the recollection of what he has done for us; and when this mingles most largely as an element among our springs of action; when, humbled indeed by a knowledge of dangers that await us, and thankful, too, for the blessings spread around us, we yet desire chiefly to be fitting children of the everlasting Father and the holy God; when we venerate him for the graciousness, and purity, and majesty of his spirit, impersonated in Jesus; and resolve to serve him truly, *before* he has granted the desire of our heart, and because he is of a nature so sublime and merciful and good; then are we in the condition of her who bent over the feet of Christ; and we are forgiven, because we have loved much.

(2.) Let us now, in conclusion, turn our attention to those portions of the New Testament, which speak of the death of Christ as the means of redemption.

I have said, that these are to be found exclusively in passages of the sacred writings which treat of the Gentile controversy, or of topics immediately connected with it. This controversy arose naturally out of the design of Providence to make the narrow, exclusive, ceremonial system of Judaism, give birth to the universal and spiritual religion of the Gospel; from God's method of expanding the Hebrew Messiah into the Saviour of humanity. For this the nation was not prepared; to this even the Hebrew Christians could not easily conform their faith; and in the achievement of this, or in persuading the world that it was achieved, did Paul spend his noble life, and write his astonishing epistles. The Jews knew that the Deliverer was to be of their peculiar stock, and their royal lineage; they believed that he would gather upon himself all the singularities of their

race, and be a Hebrew to intensity; that he would literally restore the kingdom to Israel; aye, and extend it too, immeasurably beyond the bounds of its former greatness; till, in fact, it swallowed up all existing principalities, and powers, and thrones, and dominions, and became co-extensive with the earth. Then in Jerusalem, as the centre of the vanquished nations,—before the temple, as the altar of a humbled world, did they expect the Messiah to erect his throne; and when he had taken the seat of judgment, to summon all the tribes before his tribunal, and pass on the Gentiles, excepting the few who might submit to the law, a sentence of perpetual exclusion from his realm; while his own people would be invited to the seats of honour, occupy the place of authority, and sit down with him (the greatest at his right hand and his left) at his table in his kingdom. The holy men of old were to come on earth again to see this day. And many thought that every part of the realm thus constituted, and all its inhabitants, would never die: but, like the Messiah himself, and the patriarchs whom he was to call to life, would be invested with immortality. None were to be admitted to these golden days except themselves; all else to be left in outer darkness from this region of light, and there to perish and be seen no more. The grand title to admission was conformity with the Mosaic law; the most ritually scrupulous were the most secure; and the careless Israelite, who forgot or omitted an offering, a tithe, a Sabbath duty, might incur the penalty of exclusion and death: the law prescribed such mortal punishment for the smallest offence; and no one, therefore, could feel himself ready with his claim, if he had not yielded a perfect obedience. If God were to admit him on any other plea, it would be of pure grace and goodness, and not in fulfilment of any promise.

The Jews, being scattered over the civilized world, and having synagogues in every city, came into perpetual contact *with other* people. Nor was it possible that the Gentiles,

among whom they lived, should notice the singular purity and simplicity of the Israelitish Theism, without some of them being struck with its spirit, attracted by its sublime principles, and disposed to place themselves in religious relations with that singular people. Having been led into admiration, and even profession, of the nation's theology, they could not but desire to share their hopes; which indeed were an integral part of their religion, and, at the Christian era, the one element in it to which they were most passionately attached. But this was a stretch of charity too great for any Hebrew; or, at all events, if such admission were ever to be thought of, it must be only on condition of absolute submission to the requirements of the law. The Gentile would naturally plead, that as God had not made him of the chosen nation, he had given him no law, except that of conscience; that, being without the law, he must be a law unto himself; and that if he had lived according to his light, he could not be justly excluded on the ground of accidental disqualification. Possibly, in the provocation of dispute, the Gentile might sometimes become froward and insolent in his assertion of claim; and, in the pride of his heart, demand as a right that which, at most, could only be humbly hoped for as a privilege and a free gift.

Thus were the parties mutually placed to whom the Deliverer came. Thus dense and complicated was the web of prejudice which clung round the early steps of the Gospel; and which must be burst or disentangled ere the glad tidings could have free course and be glorified. How did Providence develop from such elements the divine and everlasting truth? Not by neglecting them, and speaking to mankind as if they had no such ideas; not by forbidding his messengers and teachers to have any patience with them; but, on the contrary, by using these very notions as temporary means to his everlasting ends; by touching this and that with light before the eyes of apostles, as if to say, there are good capabilities in

these; the truth may be educed from them so gently and so wisely, that the world will find itself in light, without perceiving how it has been quitting the darkness.

So long as Christ remained on earth, he necessarily confined his ministry to his nation. He would not have been the Messiah had he done otherwise. By birth, by lineage, by locality, by habit, he was altogether theirs. Whoever then, of his own people, during his mortal life, believed in him and followed him, became a subject of the Messiah; ready, it was supposed, even by the apostles themselves, to enter the glory of his kingdom, whenever it should please him to assume it; qualified at once, by the combination of pedigree and of belief, to enter into life, to become a member of the kingdom of God, to take a place among the elect; for, by all these phrases, was described the admission to the expected realm. If, then, Jesus had never suffered and died, if he had never retired from this world, but stayed to fulfil the anticipations of his first followers, his Messianic kingdom might have included all the converts of the Israelitish stock. From the exclusion which fell on others, they would have obtained salvation. Hence, it is never in connection with the first Jewish Christians that the *death of Christ* is mentioned.

It was otherwise, however, with the Gentiles. They could not become his followers in his mortal lifetime; and had a Messianic reign *then* been set up, they must have been excluded; no missionary would have been justified in addressing them with invitation; they could not, as it was said, have entered into life. The Messiah must cease to be Jewish, before he could become universal; and this implied his death, by which alone the personal relations, which made him the property of a nation, could be annihilated. To this he submitted; he disrobed himself of his corporeality, he became an immortal spirit; thereby instantly burst his religion open to the dimensions of the world; and, as he ascended to the

skies, sent it forth to scatter the seeds of blessing over the field of the world, long ploughed with cares, and moist with griefs, and softened now to nourish in its bosom the tree of Life.

Now, how would the effect of this great revolution be described to the proselyte Gentiles, so long vainly praying for admission to the Israelitish hope. At once it destroyed their exclusion; put away as valueless the Jewish claims of circumcision and law; nailed the hand-writing of ordinances to the cross; reconciled them that had been afar off; redeemed them to God by his blood, out of every tongue, and kindred, and people, and nation; washed them in his blood; justified them *by his resurrection and ascension*; an expression, I would remark, unmeaning on any other explanation.

Even during our Lord's personal ministry, his approaching death is mentioned, as the means of introducing the Gentiles into his Messianic kingdom. He adverts repeatedly to his cross, as designed to widen, by their admission, the extent of his sway: and according to Scripture phrase, to yield to him "much fruit." He was already on his last fatal visit to Jerusalem, when, taking the hint from *the visit of some Greeks to him*, he exclaimed: "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but *if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*" He adds, in allusion to the death he should die; "and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw *all men unto me.*" * It is for this end that he resigns for awhile his life,—that he may bring in the wanderers who are not of the commonwealth of Israel: "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd: *therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life*, that

* John xii. 23, 24, 32.

I may take it again." * Many a parable did Jesus utter, proclaiming his Father's intended mercy to the uncovenanted nations: but for himself personally he declared, "I am not sent, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." † His advent was a promise of *their* economy; his office, the traditionary hope of their fathers; his birth, his life, his person, were under the Law, and excluded him from relations to those who were beyond its obligations. On the cross, all the connate peculiarities of the Nazarene ceased to exist: when the seal of the sepulchre gave way, the seal of the law was broken too; the nationality of his person passed away; for how can an immortal be a Jew? This then was the time to open wide the scope of his mission, and to invite to God's acceptance those that fear him in every nation. Though, before, the disciple might "have known Christ after the flesh," and followed his steps as the Hebrew Messiah, "yet now henceforth was he to know him so no more;" these "old things had passed away," since he had "died for all,"—died to become universal,—to drop all exclusive relations, and "reconcile the world," the Gentile world, to God.‡ Observe to whom this "ministry of reconciliation" is especially confided. As if to show that it is exclusively *the risen Christ* who belongs to all men, and that his death was the instrument of the Gentiles' admission, their great Apostle was one Paul, who had not known the Saviour in his mortal life; who never listened to his voice, till it spake from heaven; who himself was the convert of his ascension; and bore to him the relation, not of subject to the person of a Hebrew king, but of spirit to spirit, unembarrassed by anything earthly, legal, or historical. Well did Paul understand the freedom and the sanctity of this relation; and around the idea of the Heavenly Messiah gathered all his conceptions of the spirituality of the gospel, of its power over the unconscious affections, rather

* John x. 16, 17. † Matt. xv. 24. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 15—18.

than a reluctant will. His believing countrymen were afraid to disregard the observances of the law, lest it should be a disloyalty to God, and disqualify them for the Messiah's welcome, when he came to take his power and reign. Paul tells them, that while their Lord remained in this mortal state, they were right; as representative of the law, and filling an office created by the religion of Judaism, he could not but have held them *then* to its obligations; nor could they, without infidelity, have neglected its claims, any more than a wife can innocently separate herself from a living husband. But as the death of the man sets the woman free, and makes null the law of their union, so the decease of Christ's body emancipates his followers from all legal relations to him; and they are at liberty to wed themselves anew to the risen Christ, who dwells where no ordinance is needful, no tie permitted but of the spirit, and all are as the angels of God.* Surely, then, this mode of conception explains, why the death of Jesus constitutes a great date in the Christian economy, especially as expounded by the friend and apostle of those who were not "Jews by nature, but sinners of the Gentiles."† Had he never died, they must have remained aliens from his sway; the enemies against whom his power must be directed; without hope in the day of his might; strangers to God and his vicegerent.

But, while thus they "were yet without strength, Christ died for" these "ungodly;"‡ died to put himself into connection with them, else impossible; and rising from death, drew them after him into spiritual existence on earth, analogous to that which he passed in heaven. "You," says their Apostle, "being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him;" giving you, as "risen with him," a life above the world and its law of exclusion,—a life not "subject to ordinances," but of

* See *Rom. vii. 1—4.* † Gal. ii. 15. ‡ Rom. v. 6.

secret love and heavenly faith, "hid with Christ in God;" "blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and taking it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."* God had never intended to perpetuate the division between Israel and the world, receiving the one as the sons, and shutting out the other as the slaves of his household. If there had been an appearance of such partiality, he had always designed to set these bondmen free, and to make them "heirs of God through Christ;"† "in whom they had redemption through his blood" from their servile state, the forgiveness of disqualifying sins, according to the riches of his grace.‡ Though the Hebrews boasted that "theirs was the adoption,"§ and till Messiah's death had boasted truly; yet in that event, God "before the foundation of the world," had "blessed us" (Gentiles) "with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places;" "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, according" (not indeed to any right or promise, but) "to the good pleasure of his will,"‖ "and when we were enemies, having reconciled us, by the death of his son;"¶ "that in the fulness of times he might gather together in one *all things* in Christ;"** "by whom we" (Gentiles) "have now received this atonement" (reconciliation);†† that he might have no partial empire, but that "in him might all fulness dwell."‡‡ "Wherefore," says their Apostle, "remember that ye, *Gentiles in the flesh*, were in time past without Messiah, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; but now in Christ Jesus, ye, who sometime were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (not between God and man, but between Jew and

* Col. ii. 13; iii. 3. † Gal. iv. 4—7. ‡ Eph. i. 7.
§ Rom. ix. 4. ‖ Eph. i. 3—5. ¶ Rom. v. 10.
** *Eph. i. 10.* †† Rom. v. 11. ‡‡ Col. i. 19.

Gentile); "having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments, contained in ordinances; for to make in himself, of twain, one new man, so *making peace*; and that he might reconcile both unto God, in one body, by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you who were afar off, as well as to them that were nigh. For through him we both have an access by one spirit unto the Father."*

The way, then, is clear and intelligible, in which the death and ascension of the Messiah rendered him universal, by giving spirituality to his rule; and, on the simple condition of faith, added the uncovenanted nations to his dominion, so far as they were willing to receive him. This idea, and this only, will be found in almost every passage of the New Testament (excepting the Epistle to the Hebrews) usually adduced to prove the doctrine of the Atonement. Some of the strongest of these I have already quoted; and my readers must judge whether they have received a satisfactory meaning. There are others, in which the Gentiles are not so distinctly stated to be the sole objects of the redemption of the cross: but with scarcely an exception, so far as I can discover, this limitation is implied: and either creeps out through some adjacent expression in the context; or betrays itself, when we recur to the general course of the Apostle's argument, or to the character and circumstances of his correspondents. Thus Paul says, that Christ "gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time:" the next verse shows what is in his mind, when he adds, "*whereunto* I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, a teacher of THE GENTILES in faith and verity:" and the whole sentiment of the context is the *Universality of the Gospel*, and the duty of praying for Gentile kings and people, as not abandoned to a foreign God and another Mediator; for since Messiah's death, to *us all* "there is but One

* Eph. ii. 11—18.

God, and One Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus:" wherefore the Apostle wills, that *for all*, "men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath, and doubting,"—without wrath at their admission, or doubt of their adoption.* And wherever emphasis is laid on the *vast number* benefited by the cross, a contrast is implied with the *few* (only the Jews) who could have been his subjects, had he not died: and when it is said, "he gave his life a ransom *for many*;"† his blood was "shed *for many*, for the remission of sins;"‡ "thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us by thy blood, *out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation*; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth;"§ "behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of *the world*;"||—by all these expressions is still denoted, the efficacy of Christ's death in removing the Gentile disqualification, and making his dispensation spiritual as his celestial existence, and universal as the Fatherhood of God. Does Paul exhort certain of his disciples, "to feed the church of the Lord, which he hath purchased with his own blood?"¶ We find that he is speaking of the *Gentile* church of Ephesus, whose elders he

* 1 Tim. ii. 1—8.

† Matt. xx. 28; Mark. x. 45.

‡ Matt. xxvi. 28.

§ Rev. v. 9, 10.

|| John i. 29. For an example of the use of the word "*world*" to denote the Gentiles, see Rom. xi. 12—15; where St. Paul, speaking of the rejection of the Messiah by the Jews, declares that it is only temporary; and as it has given occasion for the adoption of the Gentiles, so will this lead, by ultimate reaction, to the re-admission of Israel; a consummation in which the Gentiles should rejoice without boasting or highmindedness. "If," he says, "the fall of them (the Israelites) be the riches of *the world* (the Gentiles), and the diminishing of them, the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness! For I speak to you, Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify my office; if, by any means, I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh (the Jews,) and save some of them; for if the casting away of them be the *reconciling of the world*, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?"

¶ Acts xx. 28. It is hardly necessary to say, that the reading of our common version "*church of God*" wants the support of the best authorities; and that with the general consent of the most competent critics, Griesbach reads "*church of the Lord*." See Note C.

is instructing in the management of their charge, and to which he afterwards wrote the well-known epistle, on their gentile freedom and adoption obtained by the Messiah's death. When Peter says, "ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot,"* we must enquire *to whom* he is addressing these words. If it be to the Jews, the interpretation which I have hitherto given of such language will not apply, and we must seek an explanation altogether different. But the whole manner of this epistle, the complexion of its phraseology throughout, convinces me that it was addressed especially to the *Gentile converts* of Asia Minor; and that the redemption of which it speaks is no other than that which is the frequent theme of their own apostle.

In the passage just quoted, the form of expression itself suggests the idea, that Peter is addressing a class which did not include himself: "YE were not redeemed, &c.:" further on in the same epistle the same sentiment occurs, however, without any such visible restriction. Exhorting to patient suffering for conscience sake, he appeals to the example of Christ; "who, when he suffered, threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: who, his own self, bare *our* sins in his own body on the tree; that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness:" yet, with instant change in the expression, revealing his correspondents to us, the Apostle adds, "by whose stripes YE were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your souls."† With the instinct of a gentle and generous heart, the writer, treating in plain terms of the former sins of those whom he addresses, puts himself in with them; and avoids every ap-

* 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. † 1 Pet. ii. 23—25.

pearance of that spiritual pride, by which the Jew constantly rendered himself offensive to the Gentile.

Again, in this letter, he recommends the duty of patient endurance, by appeal to the same consideration of Christ's disinterested self-sacrifice. "It is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing than for evil doing: for Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." And who are these "unjust" that are thus brought to God? The Apostle instantly explains, by describing how the "Jews by nature" lost possession of Messiah by the death of his person, and "sinners of the Gentiles" gained him by the resurrection of his immortal nature; "being put to death in flesh, but quickened in spirit; and *thereby he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, who formerly were without faith.*" This is clearly a description of the Heathen world, ere it was brought into relation to the Messianic promises. Still further confirmation, however, follows. The Apostle adds: "forasmuch, then, as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will *of the Gentiles;* when *we* walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquettings, and *abominable idolatries.*"* If we cannot admit this to be a just description of the holy Apostle's former life, we must perceive that, writing to Pagans of whom it was all true, he beautifully withholds from his language every trace of invidious distinction, puts himself for the moment into the same class, and seems to take his share of the distressing recollection.

The habitual delicacy with which Paul, likewise, classed himself with every order of persons in turn, to whom he had any thing painful to say, is known to every intelligent reader of his epistles. Hence, in *his* writings too, we

* 1 Pet. iii. 17; iv. 3.

have often to consider *with whom* it is, that he is holding his dialogue, and to make our interpretation dependant on the answer. When, for example, he says, that Jesus "was delivered for *our* offences, and was raised again for *our* justification;" I ask, "for whose?—was it for every body's?—or for the Jews', since Paul was a Hebrew?" On looking closely into the argument, I find it beyond doubt that neither of these answers is correct; and that the Apostle, in conformity with his frequent practice, is certainly identifying himself, Israelite though he was, with *the Gentiles*, to whom, at that moment, his reasoning applies itself. The neighbouring verses have expressions which clearly enough declare this; "when we were *yet without strength*," and "*while we were yet sinners*," Christ died for us. It is to the *Gentile Church* at Corinth, and while expatiating on their privileges and relations as such, that Paul speaks of the disqualifications and legal unholiness of the Heathen, as vanishing in the death of the Messiah; as the recovered leper's uncleanness was removed, and his banishment reversed, and his exclusion from the temple ended, when the lamb without blemish, which the law prescribed as his sin-offering, bled beneath the knife, so did God provide in Jesus, a lamb without blemish for the exiled and unsanctified Gentiles, to bring them from their far dwelling in the leprous haunts of this world's wilderness, and admit them to the sanctuary of spiritual health and worship: "He hath made him to be a sin-offering for us (Gentiles), who knew no sin; that we might be made the justified of God in him;" * entering, under the Messiah, the community of saints. That, in this sacrificial allusion, the Gentile adoption is still the Apostle's only theme, is evident hence; that twice in this very passage, he declares that he is speaking of that peculiar "reconciliation," the word and ministry of which have been committed to himself; he is dwelling on the topic most natural

* 2 Cor. v. 21.

to one who "magnified his office," as "Apostle of the Gentiles."

To the same parties was Paul writing, when he said, "Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us."* Frequently as this sentence is cited in evidence of the doctrine of Atonement, there is hardly a verse in Scripture more utterly inapplicable; nor, if the doctrine were true, could anything be more inept than an allusion to it in this place. I do not dwell on the fact that the paschal lamb was neither sin-offering nor proper sacrifice at all: for the elucidation of the death of Jesus by sacrificial analogies is as easy and welcome, as any other mode of representing it. But I turn to the whole context, and seek for its leading idea, before multiplying inferences from a subordinate illustration. I find the author treating, not of the *deliverance* of believers from curse or exclusion, but of their duty to keep the churches cleansed, by the expulsion of notoriously profligate members. Such persons they are to cast from them, as the Jews, at the passover, swept from their houses all the leaven they contained; and as for eight days at that season, only pure unleavened bread was allowed for use, so the church must keep the gospel-festival, free from the ferment of malice and wickedness, and tasting nothing but sincerity and truth. This comparison is the primary sentiment of the whole passage; under cover of which, the Apostle is urging the Corinthians to expel a certain licentious offender: and only because the feast of unleavened bread, on which his fancy has alighted, set in with the day of passover, does he allude to this in completion of the figure. As his correspondents were Gentiles, their Christianity commenced with the death of Christ; with him, as an immortal, their spiritual relations commenced; when he rose, they rose with him, as by a divine attraction, from an earthly to a

* 1 Cor. v. 7.

heavenly state; their old and corrupt man had been buried together with him, and, with the human infirmities of his person left behind for ever in his sepulchre; and it became them, "to seek those things which are above," and to "yield themselves to God, as those that are alive from the dead." This period of the Lord's sequestration in the heavens, Paul represents as a festival of purity to the disciples on earth, ushered in by the self-sacrifice of Christ. The time is come, he says; cast away the leaven, for the passover is slain, blessed bread of heaven to them that taste it! let nothing now be seen in all the household of the church, but the unleavened cake of simplicity and love.

Paul again appears as the advocate of the Gentiles, when he protests that now between them and the Jews "there is no difference; since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God:" that the Hebrew has lost all claim to the Messianic adoption, and can have no hope but in that free grace of God, which has a sovereign right to embrace the Heathen too; and which, in fact, has compassed the Gentiles within its redemption, by causing Jesus the Messiah to die; "by whose blood God hath set forth a propitiation, through faith; to evince his justice, while overlooking, with the forbearance of God, transgressions past;—to evince his justice in the arrangements of the present crisis; which preserve his justice (to the Israelite), yet justify on mere discipleship to Jesus."* The great question which the Apostle discusses throughout this epistle, is this: "on what terms is a man now admitted as a subject to the Messiah, so as to be acknowledged by him, when he comes to erect his kingdom?" "He must be one of the circumcised, to whom alone the holy law and promises are given," says the Jew. "That is well," replies Paul; "only the promises, you remember, are conditional on obedience; and he who claims by the law must

* Rom. iii. 22—26.

stand the judgment of the law. Can your nation abide this test, and will you stake your hopes upon the issue? Or is there on record against you a violation of every condition of your boasted covenant; wholesale and national transgression, which your favourite code itself menaces with 'cutting off?' Have you even rejected and crucified the very Messiah, who was tendered to you in due fulfilment of the promises? Take your trial by the principles of your law, and you must be cast off, and perish, as certainly as the Heathen whom you despise; and whose rebellion against the natural law, gross as it is, does not surpass your own offences against the tables of Moses. You must abandon the claim of right, the high talk of God's Justice and plighted faith;—which are alike ill-suited to you both. The rules of law are out of the question, and would admit nobody; and we must ascend again to the sovereign will and free mercy of him, who is the source of law; and who, to bestow a blessing which its resources cannot confer, may devise new methods of beneficence. God has violated no pledge. Messiah came to Israel, and never went beyond its bounds; the uncircumcised had no part in him; and every Hebrew who desired it, was received as his subject. But when the people would not have him, and threw away their ancient title, was God either to abandon his vicegerent, or to force him on the unwilling? No: rather did it befit him to say; 'if they will reject and crucify my servant,—why, let him die, and then he is Israelite no more; I will raise him, and take him apart in his immortality; where his blood of David is lost; and the holiness of his humanity is glorified; and all shall be his, who will believe, and love him, as he there exists, spiritually and truly.'" Thus, according to Paul, does God provide a new method of adoption or justification, without violating any promises of the old. Thus he makes Faith in Jesus,—a moral act instead of a genealogical accident,—the single condition of reception into *the Divine* kingdom upon earth. Thus, after the passage of

Christ from this world to another, Jew and Gentile are on an equality in relation to the Messiah; the one gaining nothing by his past privileges; the other, not visited with exclusion for past idolatry and sins; but assured, in Messiah's death, that these are to be overlooked, and treated as if cleansed away. He finds himself invited into the very penetralia of that sanctuary of pure faith and hope, from which before he had been repelled as an unclean thing; as if its ark of mercy had been purified for ever from his unworthy touch, or he himself had been sprinkled by some sudden consecration. And all this was the inevitable and instant effect of that death on Calvary; which took Messiah from the Jews, and gave him to the world.

With emphasis, not less earnest than that of Paul, does the apostle John repudiate the notion of any *claim* on the Divine admission by law or righteousness; and insist on humble and unqualified acceptance of God's free grace and remission for the past, as the sole avenue of entrance to the kingdom. This avenue was open, however, to all "who confessed that Jesus the Messiah had come in the flesh;"* in other words, that, during his mortal life, Jesus had been indicated as this future Prince; and that his ministry was the Messiah's preliminary visit to that earth on which shortly he would re-appear to reign. The great object of that visit was to prepare the world for his real coming; for as yet it was very unfit for so great a crisis; and especially to open, by his death, a way of admission for the Gentiles, and frame, on their behalf, an act of oblivion for the past. "If," says the apostle to them, "we walk in the light, *as he is in the light*" (of love and heaven), "we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin:"† the Israelite will embrace the Gentiles in fraternal relations, knowing that the cross has removed their past unho-

* 1 John iv. 2. † 1 John i. 7.

liness. Nor let the Hebrew rely on any thing now but the divine forbearance; to appeal to rights will serve no longer: "if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."* Nor let any one despair of a reception, or even a restoration, because he has been an idolater and sinner: "Jesus Christ the righteous" is "an advocate with the Father" for admitting all who are willing to be his; "and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only (not merely for our small portion of Gentiles, already converted); but also for the *whole* world,"† if they will but accept him. He died to become universal; to make all his own; to spread an oblivion, wide as the earth, over all that had embarrassed the relations to the Messiah, and made men aliens, instead of Sons of God. Yet did no spontaneous movement of their good affections solicit this change. It was "not that we (Gentiles) loved God; but that he loved us, and sent his Son, the propitiation for our sins;" "he sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him."‡ That this epistle was addressed to Gentiles, and is therefore occupied with the same leading idea respecting the cross, which pervades the writings of Paul, is rendered probable by its concluding words, which could hardly be appropriate to Jews: "keep yourselves from idols."§ How little the apostle associated any vicarious idea even with a form of phrase most constantly employed by modern theology to express it, is evident from the parallel which he draws, in the following words, between the death of our Lord and that of the Christian martyrs: "hereby perceive we love, because *Christ* laid down his life *for us;* and we ought to lay down our lives *for the brethren.*"‖

Are then the *Gentiles alone* beneficially affected by the death of Christ; and is no wider efficacy *ever* assigned to it in Scripture? The great number of passages to which I have

* 1 John i. 8. † 1 John ii. 1, 2. ‡ 1 John iv. 9, 10.
§ 1 John v. 21. ‖ 1 John iii. 16.

already applied this single interpretation, will show that I consider it as comprising *the great leading idea* of the apostolic theology on this subject; nor do I think that there is (out of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which I shall soon notice) a single doctrinal allusion to the cross, from which this conception is wholly absent. At the same time, I am not prepared to maintain, that this is the *only* view of the crucifixion and resurrection ever present to the mind of the Apostles. Jews themselves, they naturally inquired, how doubt, in particular, stood affected by the unanticipated death of its Messiah; in what way its relations were changed, when the offered Prince became the executed victim; and how far matters would have been different, if, as had been expected, the Anointed had assumed his rights and taken his power at once; and, instead of making his first advent a mere preliminary and warning visit "in the flesh," had set up the kingdom forthwith, and gathered with him his few followers to "reign on the earth." Had this—instead of submission to death, removal, and delay—been his adopted course, what would have become of his own nation, who had rejected him;—who must have been tried by that law which was their boast, and under which he came; who had long been notorious offenders against its conditions, and now brought down its final curse by despising the claims of the accredited Messiah? They must have been utterly "cut off," and cast out among the "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel," "without Messiah," "without hope," "without God;" for while "circumcision profiteth, *if thou keep the law*; yet if thou be a *breaker of the law*, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision."* Had he come *then* "to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe;"—had he then been "revealed with his mighty angels" (whom he might have summoned by "legions");—it must have been

* Rom. ii. 25.

" in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that knew not God, nor obeyed the glad tidings of the Lord Jesus Christ;" to " punish with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power." * The sins and prospects of Israel being thus terrible, and its rejection imminent (for Messiah was already in the midst of them),—he withheld his hand; refused to precipitate their just fate; and said, " Let us give them time, and wait; I will go apart into the heavens, and peradventure they will repent; only they must receive me then spiritually, and by hearty faith, not by carnal right, admitting thus the willing Gentile with themselves." And so he prepared to die and retire; he did not permit them to be cut off, but was cut off himself instead; he restrained the curse of their own law from falling on them, and rather perished himself by a foul and accursed lot, which that same law pronounces to be the vilest and most polluted of deaths. Thus says St. Paul to the Jews: " he hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, ' cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.' "† In this way, but for the death of the Messiah, Israel too must have been lost; and by that event they received time for repentance, and a way for remission of sins; found a means of reconciliation still; saw their Providence, which had been lowering for judgment, opening over them in propitiation once more; the just had died for the unjust, to bring them to God. What was this delay,—this suspension of judgment,—this opportunity of return and faith,—but an instance of " the long-suffering of God," with which " he endures the vessels of wrath (Jews) fitted to destruction; and makes known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto

* 2 Thess. i. 7—10.

† Gal. iii. 13: even here the apostle cannot refrain from adverting to his *Gentile* interpretation of the cross; for he adds,—" that the blessing of Abraham *might come* on the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ."

glory?" * If Christ had not withdrawn awhile,—if his power had been taken up at once, and wielded in stern and legal justice, a deluge of judgment must have overwhelmed the earth, and swept away both Jew and Gentile, leaving but a remnant safe. But in mercy was the mortal life of Jesus turned into a preluding message of notice and warning, like the tidings which Noah received of the flood; and as the growing frame of the ark gave signal to the world of the coming calamity, afforded an interval for repentance, and made the patriarch, as he built, a constant "preacher of righteousness;"† so the increasing body of the Church, since the warning retreat of Christ to heaven, proclaims the approaching "day of the Lord," admonishes that "all should come to repentance,"‡ and fly betimes to that faith and baptism which Messiah's death and resurrection have left as an ark of safety. "Once, in the days of Noah, the long suffering of God waited while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water: a representation, this, of the way in which baptism (not, of course, carnal washing, but the engagement of a good conscience with God,) saves us now, *by the resurrection of Jesus Christ;* who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject to him."§ Yet "the time is short,"‖ and must be "redeemed;"¶ "it is the last hour;"** "the Lord," "the coming of the Lord," "the end of all things," are "at hand."††

I have described *one* aspect, which the death of the Messiah presented to *the Jews*; and, in this, we have found another primary conception, explanatory of the scriptural language respecting the cross. Of the two relations in which this event appeared (the Gentile and the Israelitish), I believe the former to be by far the most familiar to the New Testament

* Rom. ix. 22, 23. † 2 Pet. ii. 5. ‡ 2 Pet. iii. 9.
§ 1 Pet. iii. 20—22. ‖ 1 Cor. vii. 29. ¶ Eph. v. 16; Col. iv. 5
** 1 John ii. 18. †† Phil. iv. 5; James v. 8; 1 Pet. iv. 7.

authors, and to furnish the true interpretation of almost all their phraseology on the subject. But, as my readers may have noticed, many passages receive illustration by reference to either notion; and some may have a meaning compounded of both. I must not pause to make any minute adjustment of these claims, on the part of the two interpreting ideas: it is enough that, either separately or in union, they have now been taken round the whole circle of apostolic language respecting the cross, and detected in every difficult passage the presence of sense and truth, and the absence of all hint of vicarious atonement.

It was on the *unbelieving* portion of the Jewish people, that the death of their Messiah conferred the national blessings and opportunities to which I have adverted. But to *the converts* who had been received by him during his mortal life, and who would have been heirs of his glory, had he assumed it at once, it was less easy to point out any personal benefits from the cross. That the Christ had retired from this world was but a disappointing postponement of their hopes: that he had perished as a felon, was shocking to their pride, and turned their ancient boast into a present scorn: that he had become spiritual and immortal made him no longer theirs "as concerning the flesh," and, by admitting Gentiles with themselves, set aside their favourite law. So offensive to them was this unexpected slight on the institutions of Moses, immemorially reverenced as the ordinances of God, that it became important to give some turn to the death of Jesus, by which that event might be harmonized with the national system, and be shown to *effect the abrogation of the Law, on principles strictly legal.* This was the object of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews; who thus gives us a third idea of the relations of the cross,—bearing, indeed, an essential resemblance to St. Paul's Gentile view, but illustrated in a manner altogether different. No trace is to be observed here *of Paul's* noble glorying in the Cross: so studiously is every

allusion to the crucifixion avoided, till all the argumentative part of the epistle has been completed, that a reader finds the conclusion already in sight, without having gained any notion of *the mode* of the Lord's death, whether even it was natural or violent,—a literal human sacrifice, or a voluntary self-immolation. Its ignominy and its agonies are wholly unmentioned; and his mortal infirmities and sufferings are explained, not as the spontaneous adoptions of previous compassion in him, but as God's fitting discipline for rendering him "a merciful and faithful high priest."* They are referred to in the tone of apology, not of pride; as needing rather to be reconciled with his office, than to be boldly expounded as its grand essential. The object of the author clearly is, to find a place for the death of Jesus among the Messianic functions; and he persuades the Hebrew Christians that it is (not a satisfaction for moral guilt, but) a commutation for the Mosaic Law. In order to understand his argument, we must advert for a moment to the prejudices which it was designed to conciliate and correct.

It is not easy for us to realize the feelings with which the Israelite, in the yet palmy days of the Levitical worship, would hear of an abrogation of the Law;—the anger and contempt with which the mere bigot would repudiate the suggestion;—the terror with which the new convert would make trial of his freedom;—the blank and infidel feeling with which he would look round, and find himself drifted away from his anchorage of ceremony; the sinking heart, with which he would hear the reproaches of his countrymen against his apostacy. Every authoritative ritual draws towards itself an attachment too strong for reason and the sense of right; and transfers the feeling of obligation from realities to symbols. Among the Hebrews, this effect was the more marked and the more pernicious, because their ceremonies were, in many

* Heb. ii. 17.

instances, only remotely connected with any important truth or excellent end; they were separated by several removes from any spiritual utility. Rites were enacted to sustain other rites; institution lay beneath institution, through so many successive steps, that the crowning principle at the summit easily passed out of sight. To keep alive the grand truth of the Divine Unity, there was a gorgeous temple worship: to perform this worship there was a priesthood: to support the priesthood, there were (among other sources of income) dues paid in the form of sacrifice: to provide against the non-payment of dues there were penalties: to prevent an injurious pressure of these penalties, there were exemptions, as in cases of sickness: and to put a check on trivial claims of exemption, it must be purchased by submission to a fee, under name of an atonement. Wherever such a system is received as divine, and based on the same authority with the great law of duty, it will always, by its definiteness and precision, attract attention from graver moral obligations. Its materiality renders it calculable: its account with the conscience can be exactly ascertained: as it has little obvious utility to men, it appears the more directly paid to God: it is regarded as the special means of pleasing him, of placating his anger, and purchasing his promises. Hence it may often happen, that the more the offences against the spirit of duty, the more are rites multiplied in propitiation; and the harvest of ceremonies and that of crimes ripen together.

At a state not far from this, had the Jews arrived, when Christianity was preached. Their moral sentiments were so far perverted, that they valued nothing in themselves, in comparison with their legal exactitude, and hated all beyond themselves for their want of this. They were eagerly expecting the Deliverer's kingdom, nursing up their ambition for his triumphs; curling the lip, as the lash of oppression fell upon them, in suppressed anticipation of vengeance; *-atiating* a temper, at once fierce and servile, with dreams of

Messiah's coming judgment, when the blood of the Patriarchs should be the title of the world's nobles, and the everlasting reign should begin in Jerusalem. Why was the hour delayed, they impatiently asked themselves? Was it that they had offended Jehovah, and secretly sinned against some requirement of his law? And then they set themselves to a renewed precision, a more slavish punctiliousness than before. Ascribing their continued depression to their imperfect legal obedience, they strained their ceremonialism tighter than ever: and hoped to be soon justified from their past sins, and ready for the mighty prince and the latter days.

What then must have been the feeling of the Hebrew, when told that all his punctualities had been thrown away; that at the advent, faith in Jesus, not obedience to the law, was to be the title to admission; and that the redeemed at that day would be, not the scrupulous Pharisee,—whose dead works would be of no avail; but all who, with the heart, have worthily confessed the name of the Lord Jesus? What doctrine could be more unwelcome to the haughty Israelite? it dashed his pride of ancestry to the ground. It brought to the same level with himself the polluted gentile,—whose presence would alone render all unclean in the Messiah's kingdom. It proved his past ritual anxieties to have been all wasted. It cast aside for the future the venerated law; left it in neglect to die; and made all the apparatus of Providence for its maintenance end in absolutely nothing. Was then the Messiah to supersede, and not to vindicate the law? How different this from the picture which prophets had drawn of his golden age, when Jerusalem was to be the pride of the earth, and her temple the praise of nations, sought by the feet of countless pilgrims, and decked with the splendour of their gifts! How could a true Hebrew be justified in a life without law? How think himself safe in a profession, which was without temple, without priest, without altar, without victim?

Not unnaturally, then, did the Hebrews regard with reluctance two of the leading features of Christianity; the death of the Messiah, and the freedom from the law. The epistle addressed to them was designed to soothe their uneasiness, and to show, that if the Mosaic institutions were superseded, it was in conformity with principles and analogies contained within themselves. With great address, the writer links the two difficulties together, and makes the one explain the other. He finds a ready means of effecting this, in the sacrificial ideas familiar to every Hebrew; for by representing the death of Jesus as a commutation for legal observances, he is only ascribing to it an operation, acknowledged to have place in the death of every lamb slain as a sin-offering at the altar. These offerings were a distinct recognition on the part of the Levitical code, of a principle of *equivalents* for its ordinances; a proof that, under certain conditions, they might yield: nothing more, therefore, was necessary, than to show that the death of Christ established those conditions. And such a method of argument was attended by this advantage that while the *practical end* would be obtained of terminating all ceremonial observance, the Law was yet treated as *in theory* perpetual; not as ignominiously abrogated, but as legitimately commuted. Just as the Israelite, in paying his offering at the altar to compensate for ritual omissions, recognized thereby the claims of the law, while he obtained impunity for its neglect; so, if Providence could be shown to have provided a legal substitute for the system, its authority was acknowledged, at the moment that its abolition was secured.

Let us advert then to the functions of the Mosaic sin-offerings, to which the writer has recourse to illustrate his main position. They were of the nature of a *mulct or acknowledgment rendered, for unconscious or inevitable disregard of ceremonial liabilities, and contraction of ceremonial uncleanness.* Such uncleanness might be incurred from various *causes; and* while unremoved by the appointed methods of

purification, disqualified from attendance at the sanctuary, and "cut off" "the guilty" "from among the congregation." To touch a dead body, to enter a tent where a corpse lay, rendered a person "unclean for seven days;" to come in contact with a forbidden animal, a bone, a grave; to be next to any one struck with sudden death; to be afflicted with certain kinds of bodily disease and infirmity; unwittingly to lay a finger on a person unclean, occasioned defilement, and necessitated a purification or an atonement.* Independently of these offences, enforced upon the Israelite by the accidents of life, it was not easy for even the most cautious worshipper to keep pace with the complicated series of petty debts which the law of ordinances was always running up against him. If his offering had an invisible blemish; if he omitted a tithe, because "he wist it not;" or inadvertently fell into arrear, by a single day, with respect to a known liability; if absent from disease, he was compelled to let his ritual account accumulate; "though it be hidden from him," he must "be guilty, and bear his iniquity," and bring his victim.† On the birth of a child, the mother, after the lapse of a prescribed period, made her pilgrimage to the temple, presented her sin-offering, and "the priest made atonement for her."‡ The poor leper, long banished from the face of men, and unclean by the nature of his disease, became a debtor to the sanctuary, and on return from his tedious quarantine, brought his lamb of atonement, and departed thence, clear from neglected obligations to his law.§ It was impossible, however, to provide by specific enactment for every case of ritual transgression and impurity, arising from inadvertence or necessity. Scarcely could it be expected that the courts of worship themselves would escape defilement, from imperfections in the offerings, or unconscious disqualification in people or in priest. To clear off the whole

* Num. xix. 11—20; Lev. xx. 25, 26; Num. vi. 9—12.
† Lev. v. 14—19. ‡ Lev. xii. 1—8. § Lev. xiv.

invisible residue of such sins, an annual "day of atonement" was appointed; the people thronged the avenues and approaches of the tabernacle: in their presence a kid was slain for their own transgressions, and for the high-priest the more dignified expiation of a heifer: charged with the blood of each successively, he sprinkled not only the exterior altar open to the sky, but, passing through the first and Holy chamber into the Holy of Holies, (never entered else) he touched, with finger dipped in blood, the sacred lid (the Mercy-seat) and foreground of the Ark.* At that moment, while he yet lingers behind the veil, the purification is complete; on no worshipper of Israel does any legal unholiness rest; and were it possible for the high-priest to remain in that interior retreat of Jehovah, still protracting the expiatory act, so long would this national purity continue, and the debt of ordinances be effaced as it arose. But he must return; the sanctifying rite must end; the people be dismissed; the priests resume the daily ministrations; the law open its stern account afresh; and in the mixture of national exactitude and neglects, defilements multiply again till the recurring anniversary lifts off the burden once more. Every year, then, the necessity comes round of "making atonement for the Holy sanctuary," "for the tabernacle," "for the altar," "for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation." Yet, though requiring periodical renewal, the rite, so far as it went, had an efficacy which no Hebrew could deny; for ceremonial sins, unconscious or inevitable (to which all atonement was limited†), it was accepted as an indemnity; and put it beyond doubt that Mosaic obedience was commutable.

* Lev. xvi.; xxiii. 26—32; Ex. xxx. 10; Num. xxix. 7—11.

† In three or four instances, it is true, a sin-offering is demanded from the perpetrator of some act of *moral wrong*. But in all these cases a suitable punishment was ordained also; a circumstance inconsistent with the idea, that the expiation procured remission of guilt. The *sacrifice* appended to the *penal infliction*, indicates the two-fold character of the act;—at once a *ceremonial defilement* and a *crime*; and requiring, to remedy the one, an atoning rite,—to chastise the other, a *judicial penalty*. See an excellent tract by Rev. Edward Higginson, of Hull, en-

Such was the system of ideas, by availing himself of which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews would persuade his correspondents to forsake their legal observances. "You can look without uneasiness," he suggests, "on your ritual omissions, when the blood of some victim has been presented instead, and the penetralia of your sanctuary have been sprinkled with the offering: well, on no other terms would I soothe your anxiety; precisely such equivalent sacrifice does Christianity exhibit, only of so peculiar a nature, that for *all* ceremonial neglects, intentional no less than inadvertent, you may rely upon indemnity." The Jews entertained a belief respecting their temple, which enabled the writer to give a singular force and precision to his analogy. They conceived, that the tabernacle of their worship was but the copy of a divine structure, devised by God himself, made by no created hand, and preserved eternally in heaven: this was "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man;" which no mortal had beheld, except Moses in the mount, that he might "make all things according to that pattern;"* within whose Holy of Holies dwelt no emblem or emanation of God's presence, but his own immediate Spirit; and the celestial furniture of which required, in proportion to its dignity, the purification of a nobler sacrifice, and the ministrations of a diviner priest, than befitted the "worldly sanctuary"† below. And who then can mistake the meaning of Christ's departure from this world, or doubt what office he conducts above? He is called by his ascension to the Pontificate of heaven; consecrated, "not after the law of any carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life;"‡ he drew aside the veil of his mortality, and passed into the inmost court of God: and as he must needs "have somewhat to offer,"§ he takes the only blood he had ever

titled, "The Sacrifice of Christ scripturally and rationally interpreted:" particularly p. 30—34.

* Heb. viii. 2, 5. † ix. 1, 23, 24. ‡ vii. 16; viii. 1. § viii. 3.

shed,—which was his own,—and, like the High-priest before the Mercy-seat, sanctifies therewith the people that stand without, "redeeming the transgressions" which "the first covenant" of rites entailed.* And he has not returned; still is he hid within that holiest place; and still the multitude he serves turn thither a silent and expectant gaze; he prolongs the purification still; and while he appears not, no other rites can be resumed, nor any legal defilement be contracted. Thus, meanwhile, ordinances cease their obligation, and the sin against them has lost its power. How different this from the offerings of Jerusalem, whose temple was but the "symbol and shadow" of that sanctuary above.† In the Hebrew "sacrifices there was a remembrance again made of sins every year;"‡ "the high priest annually entered the holy place;"§ being but a mortal, he could not go in with his own blood and *remain*, but must take that of other creatures and *return*; and hence it became "not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should *take away* sins,"‖ for instantly they began to accumulate again. But to the very nature of Christ's offering, a perpetuity of efficacy belongs; bearing no other than "*his own* blood," he was immortal when his ministration began, and "ever liveth to make his intercession;"¶ he could "not offer himself often, for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world,"—and "it is appointed unto men *only once* to die:" so that "*once for all* he entered into the holy place, and obtained a redemption that is *perpetual;*" "*once* in the end of the world hath he appeared, and by sacrificing himself hath absolutely *put away* sin;" "this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God," "for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."** The ceremonial then, with its periodical transgressions, and atonements, is suspended; the services of the outer

* Heb. ix. 15. † viii. 5. ‡ x. 3. § ix. 7, 25.
‖ x. 4. ¶ vii. 25. ** ix. 25—27, 12; x. 12, 14.

tabernacle cease, for the holiest of all is made manifest;* one who is "priest for ever" dwells therein: one "consecrated for evermore," "holy, harmless, undefiled, in his celestial dwelling quite separate from sinners;† who needeth not *daily*, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this he did *once for all* when he offered up himself."‡

* Heb. ix. 8. † Heb. vii. 17, 24—28.

‡ Heb. vii. 27. Let the reader look carefully again into the verbal and logical structure of this verse; and then ask himself, whether it is not as plain as words can make it, that Christ "once for all" *offered up* "*a sacrifice first for* HIS OWN SINS, and *then for the people's*." The argument surely is this; "he need not do the *daily* thing, for he *has* done it *once for all*; the never-finished work of other pontiffs, a single act of his achieved." The sentiment loses its meaning, unless that which he did once is *the self-same thing* which they did always: and what was that?—the offering by the High-priest of a sacrifice first for his own sins, and then for the people's. With what propriety, then, can Mr. Buddicom ask us this question: "Why is he said to have excelled the Jewish High-priest in *not* offering a sacrifice for himself?" I submit, that no such thing is said: but that, on the contrary, it is positively affirmed that Christ *did* offer sacrifice for his own sins. So plain indeed is this, that Trinitarian commentators are forced to slip in a restraining word and an additional sentiment, into the last clause of the verse. Thus Pierce; "Who has no need, like the priests under the law, from time to time to offer up sacrifice first for his own sins, and after that for the people's. For this *latter* he did once for all when be offered up himself; *and as to the former, he had no occasion to do it at all.*" And no doubt the writer of the epistle *ought* to have said just this, if he intended to draw the kind of contrast, which orthodox theology requires, between Jesus and the Hebrew priests. He limits the opposition between them to *one* particular;—the Son of Aaron made offering *daily*,—the Son of God *once for all.* Divines must add *another* particular; that the Jewish priest atoned for *two* classes of sins, his own and the people's,—Christ for the people's only. Suppose for a moment that this was the author's design; that the word "*this*," instead of having its proper grammatical antecedent, may be restrained, as in the commentary cited above, to the sacrifice for *the people's* sins; then the word "daily" may be left out, without disturbance to the other substantive particular of the contrast: the verse will then stand thus; "who needeth not, as those High-priests, to offer up sacrifice for his own sins; *for* he offered up sacrifice for the people's sins, when he offered up himself." Here, all the reasoning is obviously gone, and the sentence becomes a mere inanity: to make sense, we want, instead of the latter clause, the sentiment of Peirce,—*for* "he had no occasion to do this at all." This, however, is an invention of the expositor, more jealous for his author's orthodoxy, than for his composition. I think it necessary to add that, by leaving out the most emphatic word in this verse (the word *once*) Mr. Buddicom has suppressed the author's antithesis, and favoured the suggestion of his own. I have

Nor is it in its perpetuity alone, that the efficacy of the Christian sacrifice transcends the atonements of the law; it removes a higher order of ritual transgressions. It cannot be supposed indeed, that Messiah's life is no nobler offering, than that of a creature from the herd or flock, and will confer no more immunity. Accordingly, it goes beyond those "*sins of ignorance,*" those ceremonial inadvertences, for which alone there was remission in Israel; and reaches to *voluntary* neglects of the sacerdotal ordinances; ensuring indemnity for legal omissions, when incurred not simply by the accidents of the flesh, but even by intention of the conscience. This is no greater boon, than the dignity of the sacrifice requires; and does but give to his people below that living relation of soul to God, which he himself sustains above. "If the blood of bulls and of goats .... sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purify (even) your conscience from dead works (ritual observances) to serve the living God!"* Let then the ordinances go, and the Lord "put his laws *into the mind,* and write them *in the heart*;" and let all have "boldness to enter into the holiest

no doubt that this was unconsciously done; but it shows how system rubs off the angles of scriptural difficulties.—I subjoin a part of the note of John Crell on the passage: "de pontifice Christo loquitur. Quid verò fecit semel Christus? quid aliud, quam quod Pontifex antiquus statâ die quotannis[1] faciebat? Principaliter autem hic non de oblatione pro peccatis populi; sed de oblatione pro ipsius Pontificis peccatis agi, ex superioribus, ipsoque rationum contextu manifestum est."

The sins which his sacrifice cancelled must have been of the same order in the people, and in himself; certainly therefore not moral in their character, but ceremonial. His death was, for himself no less than for his Hebrew disciples, a commutation for the Mosaic ordinances. Had he not died, he must have continued under their power; "were he on earth, he would not be a priest," or have "obtained that more excellent ministry," by which he clears away, in the courts above, all possibilities of ritual sin below, and himself emerges from legal to ritual relations.

Heb. ix. 13, 14.

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[1] This is obviously the meaning of κατ' ἡμέραν in this passage; *from time to* and *in the case* alluded to, *yearly*; not, as in the common version, *daily*.

by the blood of Jesus, by this new and living way which he hath consecrated for us;" "provoking each other to love and to good works."*

See, then, in brief, the objection of the Hebrews to the gospel; and the reply of their instructor. They said; "What a blank is this; you have no temple, no priest, no ritual! How is it that, in his ancient covenant, God is so strict about ceremonial service, and permits no neglect, however incidental, without atonement; yet in this new economy, throws the whole system away; letting us run up an everlasting debt to a law confessedly unrepealed, without redemption of it, or atonement for it?"

"Not without redemption and atonement," replies their evangelical teacher; "temple, sacrifice, priest, remain to us also, only glorified into proportions worthy of a heavenly dispensation; our temple, in the skies; our sacrifice, Messiah's mortal person; our priest, his ever-living spirit. How poor the efficacy of your former offerings! year after year, your ritual debt began again: for the blood dried and vanished from the tabernacle which it purified; the priest returned from the inner shrine; and when there, he stood, with the interceding blood, before the emblem, not the reality, of God. But Christ, not at the end of a year, but at the end of the great world-era of the Lord, has come to offer up himself, —no lamb so unblemished as he; his voluntary and immortal spirit, than which was nothing ever more divinely consecrate, becomes officiating priest, and strikes his own person with immolating blow; it falls and bleeds on earth, as on the outer altar, standing on the threshhold of the sanctuary of heaven: thither he ascends with the memorials of his death, vanishes into the Holy of Holies of the skies, presents himself before the very living God, and sanctifies the temple there and worshippers here: saying to us, 'drop now for ever the legal

* Heb. x. 16, 19, 20, 24.

burdens that weigh you down; doubt not that you are free, as my glorified spirit here, from the defilements you are wont to dread; I stay behind this veil of visible things to clear you of all such taint, and put away such sin eternally. Trust then in me, and take up the freedom of your souls: burst the dead works, that cling round your conscience like cerements of the grave; and rise to me, by the living power of duty, and a loving allegiance to God.' "

So far then, as the death of Christ is treated in scripture dogmatically, rather than historically, its effects are viewed in contrast with the different order of things which must have been expected, had he, as Messiah, *not* died. And thus regarded, it presented itself to the minds of the Apostles in three relations;

First, to the Gentiles, whom it drew in to be subjects of the Messiah, by breaking down the barriers of his Hebrew personality, and rendering him spiritual as well as immortal.

Secondly, to the unbelieving Jews; whom his retirement from this world delivered from the judgment due to them, on the principles of their own law, both for their *general* violation of the *conditions* of their covenant, and for their positive rejection of him. His absence re-opened their opportunities; and to tender them this act of long-suffering, he took on himself the death which had been incurred by them.

Thirdly, to the believing Jews; the terms of whose discipleship the Messiah's death had changed, destroying all the benefits of their lineage, and substituting an act of the mind, the simpler claim of faith. It was therefore a commutation for the Ritual Law, and gave them impunity and atonement for all its violations.

With the last two of these relations, beyond their remarkable historical interest, we have no personal concern. The first remains, and ever will remain, worthy of the glorious joy, with which Paul regarded and expounded it. God has *committed* the rule of this world, to no exclusive Prince, and

no sacerdotal power, and no earthly majesty; but to one whose spirit, too divine to be limited to place and time, broke through clouds of sorrow into the clearest heaven; and thither has since been drawing our human love, though for ages now he has been unseen and immortal. An impartial God, a holy and spiritual Law, an infinite hope for all men,—are given to us by that generous cross.

It is evident that all three of the relations which I have described, belonged to the death of Jesus, *in his capacity of Messiah;* and could have had no existence, if he had not borne this character, but had been simply a private martyr to his convictions. The foregoing exposition gives a direct answer to the inquiry, pressed without the slightest pertinence upon the Unitarian, why the phraseology of the cross is never found applied to Paul or Peter, or any other noble confessor, who died in attestation of the truth; why "no record is given that we are justified by the blood of Stephen; or that he bare our sins in his own body, and made reconciliation for us."* I know not why such a question should be submitted to us; we have assuredly no concern with it; having never dreamt that the Apostles could have written as they did respecting the death on Calvary, if they had thought of it only as a scene of martyrdom. We have passed under review the whole language of the New Testament on this subject; and in the interpretation of it have *not even once* had recourse to this, which is said to be our only view of the cross. We have seen the apostles justly announcing their Lord's death, as a *proper propitiation*; because it placed whole classes of men, without any meritorious change in their character, in saving relations: declaring it a *strict substitute* for others' punishment; on the ground that there were those who must have perished, if he had not; and that he died and retired, that they might remain and live: describing it as a

* Mr. Buddicom's Lecture on the Atonement, p. 47.

sacrifice which put away sin; because it did that for ever, which the Levitical atonements achieved for a day: but we have not found them ever appealing to it either as a satisfaction to the justice of God, or an example of martyrdom to men. The Trinitarians have one idea of this event themselves; and their fancy provides their opponents with one idea of it; of the former not a trace exists, on any page of Scripture; and of the latter, the Unitarian need not avail himself at all, in explaining the language, whereof it is said to be his solitary key.

Nowhere, then, in Scripture do we meet with anything corresponding with the prevailing notions of vicarious redemption; everywhere, and most emphatically in the personal instructions of our Lord, do we find a doctrine of forgiveness, and an idea of salvation, utterly inconsistent with it. He spake often of the unqualified clemency of God to his returning children; never once of the satisfaction demanded by his justice. He spake of the joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth; but was silent on the sacrificial faith, without which penitence is said to be unavailing. Nor did he, like his modern disciples, teach that there are *two separate salvations*, which must follow each other in a fixed order; first, redemption from the penalty, secondly from the spirit, of sin; pardon for the past, before sanctification in the present; a removal of the "hindrance in God," previous to its annihilation in ourselves. If indeed there were in Christianity two deliverances, discriminated and successive, it would be more in accordance with its spirit to invert this order;—to recal from alienation first, and announce forgiveness afterwards; to restore from guilt, before cancelling the penalty; and permit the *healing* to anticipate the *pardoning* love. At least, there would seem, in such arrangement, to be a greater jealousy for the holiness of the divine law, a severer reservation of God's complacency for those who have broken from the service of sin,

than in the system, which proclaims impunity to the rebel will, ere yet its estrangement is renounced. If the outward remission precedes the inward sanctification, then does God admit to favour the yet unsanctified; guilt keeps us in no exile from him: and though the holy Spirit is to follow afterwards, it becomes the peculiar office of the cross to lift us as we are, with every stain upon the soul and every vile habit unretraced, from the brink of perdition to the assurance of glory: the divine lot is given to us, before the divine love is awakened in us: and the heirs of heaven have yet to become the children of holiness. With what consistency can the advocates of such an economy accuse its opponents of dealing lightly with sin, of deluding men into a false trust, and administering seductive flatteries to human nature?* What! shall we, who plant in every soul of sin a Hell, whence no foreign force, no external God, can pluck us, any more than they can tear us from our identity;—we, who hide the fires of torment in no viewless gulf, but make them ubiquitous as guilt;—we, who suffer no outward agent from Eden, or the Abyss, or Calvary, to encroach upon the solitude of man's responsibility, and confuse the simplicity of conscience;—we, who teach that God will not, and even cannot, spare the froward, till they be froward no more, but must permit the burning lash to fall, till they cry aloud for mercy, and throw themselves freely into his embrace;—shall we be rebuked for a lax administration of peace, by those who think that a moment may turn the alien into the elect? It is no flattery of our nature, to reverence deeply its moral capacities: we only discern in them the more solemn trust; and see in their abuse the fouler shame. And it is not of what men *are*, but of what they *might be*, that we encourage noble and cheerful thoughts. Doubtless, we think exaggeration possible (which our opponents apparently do not) even

* See Mr. M'Neile's Lecture, pp. 302, 311, 328, 340, 341.

in the portraiture of their actual character: and perhaps we are not the less likely to awaken true convictions of sin, that we strive to speak of it with the voice of discriminative justice, instead of the monotonous thunders of vengeance; and to draw its image in the natural tints provided by the conscience, rather than in the præternatural flame-colour mingled in the crucibles of Hell.

In making *penal* redemption and *moral* redemption separate and successive, the vicarious scheme, we submit, is inconsistent with the Christian idea of salvation. Not that we take the second, and reject the first, as our Trinitarian friends imagine; nor that we invert their order. We accept them both; putting them however, not in succession, but in super-position, so that they coalesce. The power and the punishment of sin perish together; and together begin the holiness and the bliss of heaven. Whatever extracts the poison, cools the sting: nor can the divine vigour of spiritual health enter, without its freedom and its joy. That there can be any separate dealings with our past guilt and with our present character, is not a truth of God, but a fiction of the schools. The sanctification of the one is the redemption of the other. The mind given up to passion, or chained to self, or any how alienated from the love and life divine, dwells, whatever be its faith, in the dark and terrible abyss: while he, and he only, that in the freedom and tranquillity of great affections, communes with God and toils for men, understands the meaning, and wins the promises, of heaven. Am I asked, 'What then is to persuade the sinful heart, thus to draw near to God;—what, but a proclamation of absolute pardon, can break down the secret distrust, which keeps our nature back, wrapped in the reserve of conscious guilt?' I reply; however much these fears and hesitations might cling round us, and restrain us from the mystic Deity of Nature, they can have no place in our intercourse with the *Father* whom Jesus represents. It needs only that Christ

be truly his image, to know "that the hindrance is not with him, but entirely in ourselves:"* to see that there is no anger in his look; to feel that he invites us to unreserved confession, and accepts our self-abandonment to him; that he lifts the repentant, prostrate at his feet, and speaks the words of severe, but truest hope. Am I told, 'that only the gratitude excited by personal rescue from tremendous danger, by an unconditional and entire deliverance, is capable of winning our reluctant nature, of opening the soul to the access of the Divine Spirit, and bringing it to the service of the Everlasting Will?' I rejoice to acknowledge, that *some* such disinterested power must be awakened, some mighty forces of the heart be called out, ere the regeneration can take place that renders us children of the Highest; ere we can break, with true new-birth, from the shell of self, and try and train our wings in the atmosphere of God. The permanent work of duty must be wrought by the affections; not by the constraint, however solemn, of hope and fear; no self-perfectionating process, elaborated by an anxious will, has warmth enough to ripen the soul's diviner fruits; the walks of outward morality, and the slopes of deliberate meditation, it may keep smooth and trim; but cannot make the true life-blossoms set, as in a garden of the Lord, and the foliage wave as with the voice of God among the trees. I gladly admit that to a believer in the vicarious sacrifice, the sense of pardon, the love of the great deliverer, may well fulfil this blessed office, of carrying him out of himself in genuine allegiance to a being most benign and holy. And perceiving that, if this doctrine were removed, there is not, *in the system of which it forms a part*, and which else would be all terror, anything that could perform the same generous part, I can understand why it seems to its advocates, an *essential* power in the renovation of the character. But

* Mr. M'Neile's Lecture, p. 338.

great as it may be, within the limits of its own narrow scheme, ideas possessed of higher moral efficacy, are not wanting, when we pass into a region of nobler and more Christian thought. Shall we say that the view of the infinite Ruler, given in the spoken wisdom or the living spirit of Christ, has no sanctifying power? Yet where is there any trace in it of the satisfactionist's redemption? When we sit at Messiah's feet, that transforming gratitude for an extinguished penalty on which the prevailing theology insists, as its central emotion, becomes replaced by a similar and profounder sentiment towards the eternal father. If to rescue men from a dreadful fate in the future, be a just title to our reverence, *never to have designed* that fate claims an affection yet more devoted; if there be a divine mercy in annihilating an awful curse, in shedding only blessing there is surely a diviner still. Shall the love restored to us after long delay, and in consideration of an equivalent, work mightily on the heart; and shall that which asked no purchase, which has been veiled by no cloud, which has enfolded us always in its tranquillity, nor can ever quit the soul opened to receive it, fail to penetrate the conscience, and dissolve the frosts of our self-love by some holier flame? Never shall it be found true, that God must threaten us with vengeance, ere we can feel the shelter of his grace!

In truth, the Christian idea of salvation cannot be better illustrated, than by the doubt which has been entertained respecting the proper translation of my text. Some, referring it to spiritual redemption, adhere to the common version; others, seeing that the apostle Peter is explaining "by what power, or by what name" he had cured the lame man at the temple gate, refer the words to this miracle of deliverance, and render them thus; "neither is there *healing* in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we can be *healed*." It matters little *which it is*; for whether we speak of body or of mind, Jesus

"*saves*" us by "*making us whole;*" by putting forth upon us a divine and healing power, by which past suffering and present decrepitude disappear together; which supplies the defective elements of our nature; cools the burning of inward fever; or calls into being new senses and perceptions, opening a diviner universe to our experience. The deformed and crooked will, bowed by Satan, lo! these many years, and nowise able to lift up itself, he loosens and makes straight in uprightness. The moral paralytic, collapsed and prostrate amid the stir of life, and incapably gazing on the moving waters in which others find their health, has often started up at the summons of that voice, though perchance "he wist not who it was;" and going his way, has found it to be "the sabbath," and owned the "work" of one who is in the spirit of "the Father." From the eye long dark and blind to duty and to God, he has caused the film to pass away, and shown the solemn look of life beneath a heaven so tranquil and sublime. Even the dead of soul, close wrapped in bandages of selfishness, —that greediest of graves,—have been quickened by his piercing call, and have come forth; to learn, "when risen," that only in the meekness that can obey is there the power to command, only in the love that serves is there the life of heart-felt liberty. To call, then, on the name and trust in the spirit of Christ, is to invoke the restoring power of God; to give symmetry and speed to our lame affections, and the vigour of an athlete to our limping wills. There is not any Christian *salvation* that is not thus identical with Christian *perfection*: "nor any other name under heaven given among men, whereby we may be (thus) *made whole*." Let all that would "be perfect be thus minded;"* seek "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;"† and they shall find in him a "power to become the Sons of God."‡

* Phil. iii. 15. † Eph. iv. 13. ‡ John i. 12.

NOTES.

A.

Relation between Natural Religion and Revelation.

It is not easy to determine, with any precision, what is Mr. M'Neile's estimate of the capabilities and defects of natural religion. It is subjected to a vague and indistinct disparagement throughout his lecture; the *impression* is left, that the character of God cannot be vindicated by appeal to his works; but I do not perceive that the lecturer commits himself to any logical proposition on the subject. One of his coadjutors,* however, has supplied this deficiency; and taking, as an antagonist, a sentence from the second Lecture of the present series, has argued at length, that "The moral Character and Unity of God are not discoverable from the works of Creation." He affirms that "to talk of 'discerning the moral attributes of God on the material structures of the universe,' is not only idle, but unreasonable:" and the justification which he offers of this bold statement seems to comprise the two following arguments:

That the universe is analogous to a cathedral or other human edifice; which discloses something of the Architect's genius and power, but nothing of his moral qualities: and

That the mixture of good and evil in the world perplexes the mind with opposite reports of the Creator's character.

If scepticism were a just object of moral rebuke, in what terms might we not speak of this "infidel" rejection of God's ancient and everlasting oracles of nature? For the serious doubts and perplexities of the devout student of creation, an unqualified respect may be entertained. But it is to be regretted that the necessities of a system should tempt the expounder of revelation to assail, with reckless indifference,

* Rev. D. James, in his Lecture entitled "The doctrine of the Trinity, proved as a *consequence from* the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ," p. 366—375.

the primitive sentiments of all religion. The aversion of orthodoxy to the theology of the unsophisticated reason and heart is however to be classed among the natural antipathies. Among all the extravagances of modern English divinity, unknown to the sound and healthy era of our national church, it is perhaps the most significant: indicating that final obscuration of Christianity, in which it cannot be made to shine without putting out every other light. This destructive mode of argumentation, which discredits everything foreign to the favourite system, is the evident result of fear, not of faith: it is a theological adoption of the Chinese policy; and keeps the Celestial Empire safe, by regarding every stranger as a possible spy, and excluding all alien ideas as forerunners of revolution. The citadel of faith is defended, by making the most dreadful havoc of every power which ought to be its strength and ornament. Put out reason, but save the Trinity; suborn experience, but prove depravity; disparage conscience, but secure the Atonement; bewilder the sentiments of justice and benevolence, only guard the everlasting Hell;—have long been the instructions of orthodoxy to its defenders: and now we are asked to silence the anthem of nature to the God of *love*, that priests without disturbance may prove him the God of *vengeance;* and to withdraw our eye from the telescope of science, which reveals the ONENESS of the Creator's work, that we may examine, through a church microscope, the *plurality* of a Hebrew noun. Can those who taunt the Unitarians with the *negative* character of their system, give a satisfactory account of the *positive* merits of a religion which *dis*believes reason, *dis*trusts the moral sense, *dis*likes science, *dis*credits nature, and for all who are without the Bible and a fit interpreter, *dis*owns the moral character of God?

In commenting upon Mr. James's position on this last point, I will confine myself to three observations:—the first, relating to the consequences of his doctrine, if true; the others explaining, by separate reference to his two arguments, why I conceive it to be false.

(1.) If there is no trace in nature of the moral attributes of God, there can be no disclosure of them in Scripture. The character of the Revealer is our only guarantee for the truth and excellence of the Revelation: and if his character is antecedently unknown, if there is nothing to preclude the idea of his being deceitful and malignant, how can we be assured that his communication is not a seduction and a lie? It is not the præternatural rank, but the just and holy mind, *of a* celestial Being, that entitles his messages to reception: and

surely it is this alone which, in our opponents' own system, makes the whole difference between the suggestions of Satan and the inspiration of God. But let us hear, in this matter, the judgment of one who adorned the English church, in times when solidity of thought and truth of sentiment were still in esteem among her clergy. Archbishop Tillotson observes; "Unless the knowledge of God and his essential perfections be natural, I do not see what sufficient and certain foundation there can be of revealed religion. For unless we naturally know God to be a Being of all perfection, and consequently that whatever he says is true, I cannot see what divine revelation can signify. For God's revealing or declaring such a thing to us, is no necessary argument that it is so, unless antecedently to this revelation, we be possessed firmly with this principle, that whatever God says is true. And whatever is known antecedently to revelation, must be known by natural light, and by reasonings and deductions from natural principles. I might further add to this argument, that the *only standard and measure to judge of divine revelations*, and to distinguish between what are true, and what are counterfeit, are the *natural notions which men have of God, and of his essential perfections.*"* And elsewhere, still more explicitly; "The strongest and surest reasonings in religion are grounded upon the essential perfections of God; so that even divine revelation itself doth suppose these for its foundation, and can signify nothing to us, unless these be first known and believed. Unless we be first persuaded of the providence of God, and his particular care of mankind, why should we believe that he would make any revelation of himself to men? Unless it be naturally known to us, that God is true, what foundation is there for the belief of his word? And what signifies the laws and promises of God, unless natural light do first assure us of his sovereign authority and faithfulness? So that *the principles of natural religion, are the foundation of that which is revealed*; and therefore in reason nothing can be admitted to be a revelation from God, which plainly contradicts his essential perfection; and consequently if any pretends divine revelation for this doctrine, that God hath from all eternity absolutely decreed the eternal ruin of the greatest part of mankind, without any respect to the sins and demerits of men, I am as certain that this doctrine cannot be of God, as I am sure that God is good and just; because this grates upon the notion that mankind have of

* Tillotson's Works, London, 1717, vol. i. p. 405.

goodness and justice. This is that which *no good man would do*, and *therefore* cannot be believed of infinite goodness; and therefore if an *Apostle* or *Angel from heaven* teach any doctrine which plainly overthrows the goodness and justice of God, let him be accursed. For every man hath greater assurance that God is good and just, than he can have of any subtle speculations about predestination and the decrees of God."*

It is somewhat curious, that in the position which they have assumed with respect to natural religion, our reverend opponents are allying themselves with Socinus: and that, in answering them, I should find myself citing the words of an Archbishop of their own church, in direct reply to this great heresiarch. On the adjoining page to the first from which I have quoted, Tillotson says, "God is naturally known to men: the contrary whereof Socinus positively maintains, though therein he be forsaken by most of his followers,—an opinion, in my judgment, very unworthy of one who, not without reason, was esteemed so great a master of reason; and (though I believe he did not see it) undermining the strongest and surest foundation of all religion, which, when the natural notions of God are once taken away, will certainly want its best support. Besides that, by denying any natural knowledge of God, and his essential perfections, he freely gives away one of the most plausible grounds of opposing the doctrine of the Trinity." That which Socinus could afford "freely to *give* away," our reverend opponents, it seems, find it necessary violently to *take* away.†

(2.) The *arguments* by which Mr. James endeavours to justify his repudiation of the primary sentiments of unrevealed religion, might be sufficiently answered by a reference to any work treating of natural theology, from the Memorabilia of Socrates to the last Bridgewater Treatise. But as a phrase occurring in my first lecture appears to have been concerned in their production, it is incumbent on me to show where their fallacy lies.

The lecturer's reasoning stands thus: The universe is a material structure; and so is a cathedral: but a cathedral gives no report of

* Tillotson's Works, London, 1717, vol. [illegible] p. 579.

† Socinus thus states the opinion which he attempts to confute: "Receptior hodie sententia est, hominem natura [illegible] esse divinitatis alicujus opinionem, cujus [illegible] quaeque humanarum rerum [illegible] Haec sententia, quam nos falsam esse [illegible] *Fausti Socini Socinus*, c. ii.

the moral character of its architect: neither, therefore, does the universe:—an excellent example, when reduced to form, of the violation of the first general rule of the syllogism, forbidding an undistributed middle term.

Did it never occur to our reverend opponent that "the material structures of the universe" are of various kinds, not all of them resembling a cathedral; nay, that he himself (not being able "to sit in a thimble," or even "in the smallest compass imaginable," "without inconvenience from want of room,")* is a "material structure," in one part of his human constitution?—a circumstance which might have suggested the distinction between organized and unorganized nature. Admitting even (what is by no means true) that the arrangements of the latter terminate, like the design of a minster, in the mere production of beauty, and indicate only genius and skill, the contrivances of the former fulfil their end in the creation of happiness in the animal world, and the maintenance of a retributive discipline in human life: results which are the appropriate fruit and expression of benevolence and equity. Even the beauty of creation, however, cannot be attributed to sentiments as little moral in their character, as those which may actuate the human artist; for He who has called into being whatever is lovely and glorious, has created also percipient minds to behold it, and transmute it from a material adjustment into a mental possession.

It is not even true that a work of art, like a cathedral, expresses no moral quality. The individual builder's character, indeed, it may not reveal. But no architect ever produced a cathedral; he is but the tool wielded by the spirit of his age; and Phidias could no more have designed York Minster, than the associated masons could have adorned the Parthenon. Ages must contribute to the origination of such works: and when they appear, they embody, not indistinctly, some of the great sentiments which possess the period of their birth.

(3.) The mixture of good and evil in the world is said to confuse our reasonings respecting the Divine Being, by presenting us with opposite reports of his character.

This argument is evidently inconsistent with the former. While *that* declared the *silence* of creation on the moral attributes of its Author, this affirms its *double* (and therefore doubtful) *speech*. After

* Mr. James's illustration of the nature of a *spirit*.

all, then, there *are* phenomena which depose to the character of the Creator, if we can only interpret their attestation aright.

The rules for the treatment of conflicting evidence are plain and intelligible; nor is there any reason why they should not be applied to the great problems of natural religion. The *preponderant* testimony being permitted to determine our convictions, the evils and inequalities of the world cannot disturb our faith in the benevolence and holiness of God; but must stand over, as a residue of unreduced phenomena, to be hereafter brought under the dominion of that law of love, which the visible systematic arrangements of Providence show to be *general*.

Happily, no sceptical reasonings, like those on which I am animadverting, can permanently prevent the natural sentiments of men from asserting their supremacy. To use the words of Bishop Butler, "*Our whole nature* leads us to ascribe *all moral perfection* to God, and to deny all imperfection of him. And this will for ever be a practical proof of his moral character, to such as will consider what a practical proof is; *because it is the voice of God speaking in us.*"*

From the opposite appearances of good and evil in the world, Mr. James derives an argument against the Unity of God, and affirms that "reason thinks it *more reasonable* to admit the existence of two almighty and independent Beings, the one eternally good, the other eternally evil."† If the lecturer's "*reason*" really recommends to him such extraordinary conclusions, and insists on patronizing the Manichean heresy, the intellectual faculty may well be in bad theological repute with him. The constant origin of pain and enjoyment, good and evil, from the *very same arrangements and structures*, renders the partition of the creative work between two antagonistic principles not very easy of conception; and it yet remains to be explained, how the laws which produce the breeze can proceed from one Being, and those which speed the hurricane from another; how hunger can have one author, and the refreshment of food another; how the power of *right* moral choice can be the gift of God, and that of *wrong* moral choice of a Demon.

The reverend lecturer attempts to weaken the argument from the unity of the creation to that of the Creator. His eccentric remarks on comets I must leave to the consideration of astronomers. The

* Introduction to the Analogy. † Lecture, p. 371.

rest of the argument is entitled to such reply as the following words of Robert Hall may give to it. "To prove the unity of this great Being, in opposition to a plurality of Gods, it is not necessary to have recourse to metaphysical abstractions. It is sufficient to observe, that the notion of more than one author of nature is inconsistent with that harmony of design which pervades her works; that it solves no appearances, is supported by no evidence, and serves no purpose but to embarrass and perplex our conceptions." *

B.

Trinitarian and Unitarian Ideas of Justice.

It is only natural that the parable of the Prodigal Son should be no favourite with those, who deny the unconditional mercy of God. The place which this divine tale occupies in the Unitarian theology appears to be filled, in the orthodox scheme, by the story of Zaleucus, king of the Locrians; which has been appealed to in the present controversy by both the Lecturers on the Atonement, and seems to be the only endurable illustration presented, even by Pagan history, of the execution of vicarious punishment. This monarch had passed a law, condemning adulterers to the loss of both eyes. His own son was convicted of the crime: and to satisfy at once the claims of law and of clemency, the royal parent "commanded one of his own eyes to be pulled out, and one of his son's." Is it too bold a heresy to confess, that there seems to me something heathenish in this example, and that, as an exponent of the Divine character, I more willingly revere the Father of the prodigal, than the father of the adulterer?

Without entering, however, into any comparison between the Locrian and the Galilean parable, I would observe, that the vicarious theory receives no illustration from this fragment of ancient history. There is no analogy between the cases, except in the violation of truth and wisdom which both exhibit; and whatever we are instructed to admire in Zaleucus, will be found, on close inspection, to be absent from the orthodox representation of God. We pity the Grecian king, who had made a law without foresight of its application, and so sympathize with his desire to evade it, that any quibble which legal ingenuity can devise for this purpose, passes with slight condemnation: casuistry refuses to be severe with a man implicated in such a difficulty.

* Modern Infidelity considered, p. 18.

But the Creator and Legislator of the human race, having perfect knowledge of the future, can never be surprised into a similar perplexity; or ever pass a law at one time, which at another he desires to evade. Even were it so, there would seem to be less that is unworthy of his moral perfection, in saying plainly, with the ancient Hebrews, that he "repented of the evil he thought to do," and said, "it shall not be;" than in ascribing to him a device for preserving consistency, in which no one capable of appreciating veracity can pretend to discern any sincere fulfilment of the law. However barbarous the idea of Divine "repentance," it is at least ingenuous. Nor does this incident of Zaleucus and his son present any parallel to the alleged relation between the Divine Father who receives, and the Divine Son who gives, the satisfaction for human guilt. The Locrian king took a part of the penalty himself, and left the remainder where it was due; but the Sovereign Law-giver of Calvinism puts the whole upon another. To sustain the analogy, Zaleucus should have permitted an innocent son to have both his eyes put out, and the convicted adulterer to escape.

The doctrine of Atonement has introduced among Trinitarians a mode of speaking respecting God, which grates most painfully against the reverential affections due to him. His nature is dismembered into a number of attributes, foreign to each other, and preferring rival claims; the Divine tranquillity appears as the equilibrium of opposing pressures,—the Divine administration as a resultant from the collision of hostile forces. Goodness pleads for that which holiness forbids; and the Paternal God would do many a mercy, did the Sovereign God allow. The idea of a conflict or embarrassment in the Supreme Mind being thus introduced, and the believer being haunted by the feeling of some tremendous difficulty affecting the Infinite government, the vicarious economy is brought forward as the relief, the solution of the whole perplexity; the union, by a blessed compromise, of attributes that could never combine in any scheme before. The main business of theology is made to consist, in stating the conditions, and expounding the solution, of this imaginary problem. The cardinal difficulty is thought to be, the reconciliation of Justice and Mercy; and, as the one is represented under the image of a Sovereign, the other under that of a Father, the question assumes this form: how can the same being at every moment possess both these characters, without abandoning any function or feeling appro*priate* to either? how, especially, can the Judge remit,—it is beyond

his power; yet, how can the Parent punish to the uttermost?—it is contrary to his nature.

All this difficulty is merely fictitious; arising out of the determination to make out that God is both wholly Judge, and wholly Father; from an anxiety, that is, to adhere to two metaphors, as applicable, in every particular, to the Divine Being. It is evident that both must be, to a great extent, inappropriate; and in nothing surely is the impropriety more manifest, than in the assertion that, as Sovereign, God is naturally bound to execute laws which, nevertheless, it would be desirable to remit, or change in their operation. Whatever painful necessities the imperfection of human legislation and judicial procedure may impose, the Omniscient Ruler can make no law which he will not to all eternity, and with entire consent of his whole nature, deem it well to execute. This is the Unitarian answer to the constant question, "How can God forgive in defiance of his own law?" It is not in defiance of his laws: every one of which will be fulfilled to the uttermost, in conformity with his first intent; but nowhere has he declared that he would not forgive. All justice consists in treating moral agents according to their character; the inexorability of human law arises solely from the imperfection with which it can attain this end, and is not the essence, but the alloy, of equity: but God, who searches and controls the heart, exercises that perfect justice, which permits the penal suffering to depart only with the moral guilt; and pardons, not by cancelling any sentence, but by obeying his eternal purpose to meet the wanderer returning homeward, and give his blessing to the restored. Only by such restoration can any past guilt be effaced. The thoughts, emotions, and sufferings of sin, once committed, are woven into the fabric of the soul; and are as incapable of being absolutely obliterated thence and put back into non-existence, as moments of being struck from the past, or the parts of space from infinitude. Herein we behold alike "the goodness and the severity of God;" and adore in him not the balance of contrary tendencies, but the harmony of consentaneous perfections. How plainly does experience show that, if his personal unity be given up, his moral unity cannot be preserved!

The representation of God as a Creditor, to whom his responsible creatures are in debt to the amount of their moral obligations, is no less unfit to serve as the foundation of serious reasonings, than the idea of him as a Sovereign. As a loose analogy, likely to produce a vivid impression on minds filled with ideas borrowed from the insti-

tution of property, it unavoidably and innocently occurs to us; but to force any doctrinal sentiments from it, is to strain it beyond its capabilities. Mr. Buddicom describes it as a favourite with the Unitarians: "our opponents assert, that sins are to be regarded as *debts* and as *debts only*."* I will venture to affirm that no Unitarian who heard this believed his own ears, till he saw it in print; so incredibly great must be the ignorance of Unitarian theology which could dictate the statement. The sentiment attributed to us is one, against which our whole body of moral doctrine is one systematic protest, and which has place in our arguments against the vicarious scheme, *only because it is the fundamental idea, on which that scheme is usually declared to rest*. In one of the most recent and deservedly popular Unitarian publications on this subject, I find a long note devoted to the destruction of this pecuniary analogy, which, the Author observes, "seems very incomplete and unsatisfactory. Punishment is compared to a debt, supposed to be incurred by the commission of the offence. To a certain degree there is a resemblance between the two things, which may be the foundation of a *metaphor*; but when we proceed to *argue* upon this metaphor, we fall into a variety of errors."† That orthodoxy does incessantly "argue upon this metaphor," is notorious; and the present controversy is not deficient in specimens. "All that the creature can accomplish is a debt due to the Creator,"‡ says Mr. James, who reasons out the mercantile view of redemption with an unshrinking precision, unequalled since the days of Shylock; who insists on "eye for eye, tooth for tooth, life for life," and condemns any alteration (of course, our Lord's) of this rule, as "false charity, or mistaken compassion;"§ who inquires whether, in the payment of redemption, an angel might not go for a number of men, and decides in the negative, because "the highest created angel in existence" (having as much as he can do for himself) "could not produce the smallest amount of supererogatory obedience or merit to transfer to a fellow angel, or to man;" ‖ and who, in reply to the question, "What price will God accept for the lives that are justly sentenced to eternal death?" says, "the answer to this is very simple: he will accept nothing but what will be a real equivalent—

* Lecture, p. 451.

† Remarks on the commonly-received Doctrine of Atonement and Sacrifice, by Rev. W. Turner, jun., A.M. Note A. second edition.

‡ Lecture, p. 414. § Ibid. p. 410. ‖ Ibid. pp. 412, 413.

a full compensation—an adequate price." * In what bible of Moloch or of Mammon all this is found, I know not; sure I am, it was never learned at the feet of Christ.

Unitarians object to the cruelty and injustice attributed to the Eternal Father, in laying upon the innocent Jesus the punishment of guilty men. Mr. Buddicom's reply, though not new, is remarkable. "Do we, however, assert any thing as to the *fact* of our Lord's sufferings, which they who deny his atonement do not also assert? If, then, it be a truth historical, that he did suffer through life, agonize in the garden, and die on the cross, does it not appear much greater cruelty in God, to impose those sufferings, which Jesus is admitted to have undergone, without any benefit to the transgressor, or any vindication of his own glory?" †

I had always thought, and still think, that our Trinitarian friends *do* assert a great deal "as to the *fact*" (*i.e.* the *amount* and *intrinsic character*, apart from the *effects*) "of our Lord's sufferings, which we cannot admit. A human being, says the Unitarian, died on the cross, with such suffering as a perfect human being may endure." Will Mr. Buddicom be content with this description of "the *fact*?" and does he merely wish to subjoin, that on the death of "this man," God *took occasion* to forgive *all men* who are to be saved at all? If so, I admit that the imputation of cruelty is groundless; and have only to observe, that there is no perceptible relation of cause and effect between the occasion and the boon; and that the cross becomes simply the date, the chronological sign, of a Divine volition, arbitrarily attached to that point of human history. But then, how can Mr. Buddicom defend (as he does) the phrase "*blood of God*?" ‡ Theology can perform strange feats; and to its sleight of words nothing is impossible. The doctrine of the *communication of properties* between the two natures of cur Lord, comes in to relieve the difficulty; and having established that whatever is true of *either* nature may be affirmed of *Christ*, and by inference, even of the *other*, it proves the propriety of saying, both that the Divine nature cannot suffer, and yet that God bled.§ Heterodoxy, however, in its perverseness, still thinks with Le Clerc of this κοινωνία ἰδιωμάτων, that it is "as intelligible, as if we were to say, there is a circle so united with a triangle, that the circle has the properties of the triangle, and the triangle those of the circle." ‖

* Lecture, p. 411. † Ibid. p. 492. ‡ Ibid. p. 507.
§ Ibid. pp. 511, 512. ‖ Ars Critica, P. I. sect. i. cap. ix. § 11.

C.

The reading in Acts xx. 28.

No competent critic, I apprehend, can read without surprise Mr. Buddicom's note (H.) on the reading of this verse. The slight manner in which Griesbach is set aside, to make way for the authority of critical editions of the N. T. since his time; the vague commendation of the edition of Dr. Scholtz, "which, it may well be hoped, leaves us little more to expect or desire,"—as if there were nothing peculiar or controverted in the critical principles of that work; the citation of a passage from this Roman Catholic editor, in which the critic becomes the theologian, and makes use of his own reading of θεοῦ to prove "that Christ is God;" together with the statement that the reading is of *no doctrinal importance*; combine to render this a remarkable piece of criticism. If the learned Lecturer had *defended* his dissent from Griesbach, or attempted to invalidate the reasoning of that Editor's elaborate note on the passage, some materials for consideration and argument would have been afforded. But no reason is assigned for the preference of θεοῦ over κυρίου, except that Dr. Scholtz adopts it, and says nothing about it; though Griesbach rejects it, and says a great deal about it; and very conclusively too, in the opinion of most scholars, not excepting Mr. Byrth. Surely the paradoxical preference which Scholtz gives to the Byzantine recension is not a reason for hoping that he has left us nothing more to expect, in the determination of the text of the N. T.; still less is it a reason why his readings, simply because they are his, should supersede Griesbach's;—from whom, I submit, no sober critic should venture to depart, without at least intimating the *grounds* of his judgment. I have not seen the critical edition of the learned Roman Catholic; but unless its Prolegomena contain some much better reasons than are adduced in his "Biblisch-kritische Reise," for his attachment to the Constantinopolitan family of manuscripts, it may be safely affirmed, that Griesbach will no more be superseded by Scholtz, than he was anticipated by Matthæi.

The text in question is not one, on the reading of which Griesbach expresses his opinion with any hesitation. "Ex his omnibus luculenter apparet, pro lectione θεοῦ ne unicum quidem militare codicem, qui sive vetustate, sive internâ bonitate suâ testis idonei et incorrupti laude ornari queat. Non reperitur, nisi in libris recentioribus, iis-

demque vel penitus contemnendis, vel misere, multis saltem in locis, interpolatis."—" Quomodo igitur, salvis criticæ artis legibus, lectio θεοῦ, utpote omni auctoritate justâ destituta, defendi queat, equidem haud intelligo." In the face of this decision, Mr. Buddicom reads θεοῦ: and does any one then believe, that in Unitarians alone, theological bias influences the choice of a reading?

The attempt to elicit from the word κυρίου the same argument for the Deity of Christ, which might be derived from the reading θεοῦ, I confess myself unable to comprehend. Does Mr. Buddicom intend to assert, that when any person is called κύριος (Lord) in the N. T., it means that he is Jehovah? Or, when this is denoted, is there some peculiarity of grammatical usage, indicating the fact? If so, it is of moment that this should be pointed out, and illustrated by examples; the idiom not being adequately described by saying that "the word" is "*put in the form of an unqualified and unequalled preference.*"

D.

Archbishop Magee's controversial Character.

In the year 1815 a discussion arose out of the general controversy on the doctrine of the Trinity, respecting the proper use of the word UNITARIAN. Those who were anxious to be designated by this name were divided in opinion as to the latitude with which it should be employed. One class proposed to limit it to believers in the simple humanity of our Lord, and to exclude from it all who held his pre-existence, from the lowest Arian to the highest Athanasian. Another class protested against this restriction; suggested that, both by its construction and its usage, the word primarily referred, not to the *nature of Christ*, but to the *personality of the Godhead*; that as Trinitarians denoted, by the prefix (Tri) to their name, the *three persons* of their Deity, so by the prefix (*Un*) should Unitarians express the *one person* of *theirs*; that in no other way could the numerical antithesis, promised to the ear, be afforded to the mind; and accordingly that under the title *Unitarian* should be included all Christians who directed their worship to one personal God, whatever they might think of the nature of Christ. It is evident that, in this latter sense, the name must comprehend a much larger class than in the former. The discussion between the two parties was conducted in the pages of the Monthly Repository, at that time the organ of the English Unitarian theology.

Meanwhile, the defenders of orthodoxy were not indifferent to the subject of debate; nor at all more agreed about it than their theological opponents. The majority regarded the word Unitarian as a *creditable* name, which was by no means to be abandoned to a set of heretics, hitherto held up to opprobrium by the title of *Socinian*. They accordingly proposed to consider it as expressing the belief in *One God* (without reference to the number of persons), in contradistinction to the belief in *many Gods*; so that its opposite should be, not as the analogy of language seemed to require, *Trinitarian*, but *Polytheist*. Thus defined, the appellation belonged to Trinitarians as well as to others; and the assumption of it, by those who dissented from the doctrine of the Trinity, was construed into a charge of Tritheism against the orthodox. Another party, however, comprising especially Archbishop Magee in the church, and the High Arians out of it, treated the name as one, not of honour, but of *disgrace*;—were anxious to fix it exclusively on Mr. Belsham's school of humanitarians, and to rescue the believers in the pre-existence of Christ, of every shade, from its pollution;—and affected to regard every extension of it to these, as a disingenuous trick, designed to swell the appearance of numbers, and to act as "a decoy" for drawing "to Mr. Belsham" all who were "against Athanasius."* And so the poor Unitarians could please nobody, and were in imminent danger of being altogether anonymous. If they did not *extend* their name so as to take in every church, Athanasian and all, they were guilty of false imputation on Trinitarians, and of monopolizing an honour which was no property of theirs. If they did not *narrow* it to "Mr. Belsham's class," they were accused of "equivocation," and of cunningly dragging the harmless Arians into participation of their disgrace. If they *denied* that the whole Church of England was Unitarian, they committed an act of impudent exclusion; if they *affirmed* that Mr. Locke and Sir Isaac Newton were Unitarian, they were chargeable with a no less impudent assumption, and rebuked for "posthumous proselytism."

Of the three possible meanings of the word, the Humanitarian, the Uni-personal, and the Monotheistic,—Mr. Aspland ably and successfully vindicated the second; in opposition to Mr. Norris, a Trinitarian

* Magee on the Atonement, vol. iii. p. 335. Note. 5th Edition. This note is a broad caricature of the discussion in the Monthly Repository: and shows that the Author might have been the Cruikshanks of theology, had his *humour* always been *good-humour*.

controversialist, who insisted on the third, and declared he would call his opponents *Socinians*; and amid the reproaches of Archbishop Magee, who clung to the first, and denounced the wider application as a "dishonest" "management of the term." With these things in mind, let the reader attend to the following passage from that prelate's celebrated work:

"How great are the advantages of a well-chosen name! *Mr. Aspland*, in his warm recommendation of the continuance of the use of the word *Unitarian*, in that ambiguous sense in which it had already done so much good to the cause, very justly observes, from Dr. South, that 'the generality of mankind is *wholly* and *absolutely* governed by *words* and *names*;' and that 'he, who will set up for a skilful manager of the rabble, *so long as they have but ears to hear*, needs never enquire whether they have any understanding whereby to judge: but with two or three popular empty words, well tuned and humoured, may whistle them backwards and forwards, upwards and downwards, till he is weary; and get upon their backs when he is so.' *Month. Rep.* vol. x. p. 481.—And what does *Mr. Aspland* deduce from all this? Why, neither more nor less than this,—that the name *Unitarian* must never be given up; but all possible changes rung upon it, let the opinions of those who bear that name be ever so various and contradictory."*

Now what does the reader think of Mr. Aspland? He despises him, as the deliberate proposer of an imposture; as one who sets up for "a skilful manager of the rabble," and who argues for the name "Unitarian," *because* it may enable his party to "get upon the backs" of the multitude. The Archbishop, I presume, *means* to leave this impression. Let us look then to the facts.

The quotation is from Mr. Aspland's "Plea for Unitarian Dissenters." The author is expostulating with Mr. Norris, who had vowed still to fasten the term *Socinian* on dissentients from the doctrine of the Trinity; and is urging the impropriety of irritating a religious body by giving them a disowned and confessedly unsuitable designation. Mr. Aspland introduces his reference to Dr. South by the following passage:

"It is not without design that you cling to a known error. The name of Socinian is refused by us; this is one reason why an ungenerous adversary may choose to give it: and again, the term having

* Magee on the Atonement, vol. iii. pp. 343, 344. Note.

been used (with some degree of propriety) at the first appearance of this class of Unitarians, which was at a period when penal laws were not a dead letter, and when theological controversies were personal quarrels, it is associated in books with a set of useful phrases such as *pestilent heretics, wretched blasphemers,* and the like, which suit the convenience of writers who have an abundance of enmity but a lack of argument, and who, whilst they are reduced to the necessity of borrowing, are not secured by their good taste or sense of decorum from taking, in loan, the excrescences of defunct authors; this is a second reason why the name 'Socinian' is made to linger in books, long after Socinians have departed from the stage."

Then follows the note from which Archbishop Magee has quoted: but from which he has omitted the parts inclosed in brackets.

["Once more, I must beg leave to refer you to Dr. South, for an appropriate observation or two, *on the fatal imposture and force of words.*]

"'The generality of mankind is wholly and absolutely governed by *words* and names; [*without*, nay, for the most part, even *against* the knowledge men have of things. The multitude or common route, like a drove of sheep, or an herd of oxen, may be managed by any noise, or cry, which their drivers shall accustom them to.

"' And] he who will set up for a skilful manager of the rabble, so long *as they have but ears to hear*, needs never enquire whether they have any understanding whereby to judge: but with two or three popular, empty words,' 'well-tuned and humoured, may whistle them backwards and forwards, upwards and downwards, till he is weary; and get upon their backs when he is so.' "*

And now, may I not ask, what does the reader think of Archbishop Magee? Mr. Aspland indignantly CONDEMNS the "imposture" practised by false names; and, by a garbled quotation, he is held up as RESORTING to it. He *really says* to *his opponents*, "Call us Socinians no more, for you must know it is unjust;" he is *represented as saying* to *his friends*, "We will never cease to call ourselves Unitarians, for it is a capital trick." And thus, by scoring out and interlining, his own expostulation against a base policy is metamorphosed into an indictment, charging him with the very same. Mr. Byrth and Mr. M'Neile are men, as I believe, of honourable minds: and the latter has rebuked, as they deserve, "garbled quotations." I

* Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature, vol. x. p. 481. 1815. I quote from this work, rather than from Mr. Aspland's "Plea for Unitarian Dissenters," in obedience to the Archbishop's own reference.

ask them to acquit me of "outraging the memory of departed greatness."

"My respected opponents know as well as I do," "that dishonest criticism, as well as dishonesty of every kind, consists not in the number of the acts which are perpetrated, but in the unprincipled disposition which led to the perpetration."* I might therefore be content with the example of "misrepresentation the most black" which I have given. But from the list which lies before me, I think it right to take one or two instances more, admitting of brief exposure.

In the Authorized Version, 1 Cor. xv. 47. stands thus; "The first man *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* the Lord from heaven;" the substantive verb in both parts of the verse having nothing, as the Italics indicate, to correspond with it in the original; but being inserted at the discretion of the translators to complete the sense. From the second clause Trinitarians usually derive an argument for the pre-existence of Christ, conceiving that it teaches the *origin of our Lord from heaven*. Some of their best commentators, however, understand the clause as referring not to Christ's *past* entrance into this world, but to his *future* coming to judgment. Thus Archbishop Newcome renders; "The second man *will be* [the Lord] from heaven." And Dr. Whitby paraphrases; "The second man is the Lord [*descending*] from heaven [*to raise our bodies, and advance them to that place*];" and he defends this interpretation in a note.† Mr. Belsham adopts this rendering, both in the "Improved Version" and in his "Calm Enquiry," giving, with the sanction of the authorities I have cited, a *past* verb to the first clause, a *future* verb to the second. The admirable Newcome and Whitby, then, must share the Archbishop's rebuke, for "the total inadmissibility of this *arbitrary* rendering of the Unitarians, and the *grossness* of their *endeavour to pervert the sense of Scripture*." "Here," he observes, "we have a change of tense, which not only has no foundation in either the Greek or Latin text, but is *in direct opposition to both*; since in both the perfect sameness of the corresponding clauses obviously determines the sameness of the tense."‡ Of the "unscholarlike exaggeration" of this criticism I say nothing, merely wishing it to be observed in passing, that Mr. Belsham's version is not of Unitarian origin, and proves no doctrinal bias, much less any "dishonesty."

* Preface to Mr. Byrth's Lecture, part i. p. vii.

† Newcome and Whitby *in loc.*

‡ Magee on the Atonement, vol. iii. p. 222.

But a question arises respecting the text, as well as the translation, of this verse; the phrase "the Lord," in the second clause, being marked by Griesbach as probably to be omitted; and the word "heavenly" to be appended at the close. The original of the common translation stands thus: ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος, ἐκ γῆς χοϊκός· ὁ δεύτερος ἄνθρωπος, ὁ κύριος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ. With the probable emendations the latter clause would read thus: ὁ δεύτερος ἄνθρωπος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ὁ οὐράνιος: and Archbishop Newcome's translation, conformed to this text, becomes that of Mr. Belsham; "The first man *was* from the ground, earthy: the second man *will be* from heaven, heavenly."

There are then two points to be determined respecting this passage—the *reading*, and the *rendering*, which, in this case, is equivalent to the *interpretation* also. Mr. Belsham, in his Calm Inquiry, treats of *both;* and is accused by the Archbishop, in the following passage, of discussing the "unimportant matter" of the *text* with great pomp; while adducing, *in favour of his translation and the future tense*, no authority *except the Vulgate;* "primus homo de terrâ, terrenus: secundus homo de cœlo, cælestis." The indictment and argument run thus:—"The grand point to be established for the Unitarians is, as we have seen, the use of the *future* in the second clause of the text:—'the second man WILL BE from heaven:'—for, if we read 'WAS from heaven,' *actum est!* it is all over with the Unitarians; inasmuch as, in this passage, the origin of the BEING, without any possible pretence as to the *doctrines*, is unequivocally the subject. How does *Mr. Belsham* proceed? Having made a good deal of flourish, as the Improved Version had also done before him, about the words κύριος and οὐράνιος; having also lumped together some irrelevant matter about the Polish Socinians and *Dr. Price;* and having observed somewhat upon the interpretation of *Newcome*, *Whitby*, and *Alexander;* having, in short, appeared to say a good deal, whilst he took care to preserve a profound silence throughout (as the Improved Version also has done,) respecting any arguments in favour of the *future tense* in the second clause—the single point on which the entire question rests,—he all of a sudden, very calmly and composedly asserts, 'The Vulgate renders the text, "The first man was of the earth, earthy. The second man will be from heaven, heavenly."' (Calm Inq. p. 121.*) He then triumphantly concludes, and all is set-

* In the 2nd Edition it is p. 78. All my citations are made from this Edition of Mr. B's work, published in 1816; and from the 5th Edition of Archbishop Magee's, published in 1832.

tled. In this manner, one text after another, of those that proclaim our Lord's pre-existence, is extinguished by the *Calm Inquirer* and his coadjutors. And so the cause of Socinian expurgation goes forward.

"Perhaps, in the annals of dishonest controversy, another instance like this is not to be found. A discussion of unimportant matter is *busily* kept up: the main point of difference, and in truth the only one deserving of attention, the *change of tense*, is passed over, as if it were a thing not at all in dispute: the Vulgate is then quoted, *in direct opposition to the truth*, as reading the words 'WAS' and 'WILL BE' in the two corresponding clauses: and thus, indirectly, the false rendering of the text by the Unitarians is sustained by a false quotation from the Vulgate; and by a quotation which the author, if his memory had lasted from one page to the other, must have known to be false; since, in the preceding page, he had himself cited the very words of the Vulgate:—'Primus homo de terrâ, terrenus; secundus homo de cœlo, cælestis:'—in which, words there is not only no justification of the change from WAS to WILL BE; but there is, on the contrary, as in the original Greek, a declaration, as strong as the analogies of language will admit, that the tense employed in the first clause must pass unchanged into the second. In a word, there is given by the Vulgate itself a direct contradiction to the report which is made of it by the *Calm Inquirer*. The man of 'sound understanding,' however, whom he addressed in *English* on the one page, being possibly not exactly acquainted with what was contained in the *Latin* on the other, and being consequently unaware that his author was imposing on him a false translation, would of course be fully satisfied on the authority of the Vulgate (more especially as so much had been said to leave the general impression of uncertainty as to the true reading of the *Greek* text, and the consequent opinion, that the Vulgate was the only ancient authority to be relied on,) that in this passage could be found no proof of our Lord's pre-existence! What are we to think of the cause that needs such support; and what of the interests that can attract such supporters?" *

We are to understand, then, that Mr. Belsham's *only authority for the tenses of his version* is a wilful mistranslation of the Vulgate; and that he cunningly conceals from the mere English reader the circum-

* Magee on the Atonement, vol. iii. pp. 223, 224.

stance that the Vulgate, having no verb, has no tenses. Now, as to the last point, he *distinctly informs* his reader that *there is no verb* in the Latin; and as to the former, *he never appeals to the* RENDERING *of the Vulgate at all, but to the* READING only. "How can this be?" I shall be asked; "for the Archbishop cites his words, 'The Vulgate RENDERS the text,' &c." True; *but the Archbishop quotes him falsely;* and the real words are, "The Vulgate READS the text," &c. Let the original and the citation appear side by side.

Mr. Belsham's words.	*Archbishop Magee's quotation.*
"The Vulgate READS the text, 'The first man *was* of the earth, earthy. The second man *will be* from heaven, heavenly.'	"The Vulgate RENDERS the text, 'The first man was of the earth, earthy. The second man will be from heaven, heavenly.'"*
"This is not improbably the TRUE READING."	

The verbs, in both clauses, Mr. Belsham has printed in italics, to indicate (in conformity with the usual practice in his work, and the Improved Version, as well as in our common translation) the absence of any corresponding words in the Latin text. This circumstance, which destroys the whole accusation, his accuser has suppressed.

And as to the "preserving a profound silence throughout respecting any arguments in favour of the future tense in the second clause," it so happens that the "somewhat" which is observed "upon the interpretation of Newcome, Whitby, and Alexander," is simply an appeal to these authorities on this very matter of the future tense,—"the single point on which the entire question rests."

On the whole, can our upright and learned opponents tell, whether "in the annals of dishonest controversy, another instance like" the foregoing "is to be found?" I can assure them, that from the same work, I could produce many more.

In our present controversy, our Rev. opponents have been misled by their reliance on this unscrupulous adversary of the Unitarians:

* There is a possibility, which I think it right to suggest, of a difference between the two Editions of Mr. B's work; as, however, the accusation is still found in the newest Edition of the Archbishop's book, I conclude that this is not the case. Indeed, even if the Prelate's quotation had been *verbally* true, it would *in spirit* have been no less false: for, at all events, Mr. B. cites the Vulgate, to give evidence as to the *text*, not the *translation*; and had he used the word *renders*, it would only have been because the term naturally occurs when a VERSION is adduced to determine a READING.

and by not referring to his pages, have taken his heavy responsibilities on themselves. In the first Lecture of the series, Mr. Ould has represented Dr. Priestley as saying, that the sacred writers produced "lame accounts, improper quotations, and inconclusive reasonings."* Dr. Magee has exhibited this sentence as a citation from Priestley's 12th Letter to Mr. Burn;† the fact being, that he wrote only six letters to Mr. Burn; and that *neither in these, nor any where else, is such a sentence to be found.* The first phrase, indeed, ("lame account") was once applied by Dr. Priestley to the early chapters in Genesis; but deliberately retracted with an expression of regret that it had been used. Let the learned prelate pass sentence on himself: he says, "It is surely *a gross falsification of his author*, to give, *as one continued quotation* from him, (as the established meaning of the form here employed, unequivocally implies,) that which is an arbitrary selection of words drawn violently together from a lengthened context."‡ I can assure our respected opponents, that their Lectures contain other citations, drawn from the same source, which, after the most careful search, I believe to be no less false. And is not an ungenerous use made of obnoxious writings, when we find enumerated and quoted among Unitarian authors, *Evanson*, whose scepticism received its most effectual replies from Priestley and his friends; and *Gagneius*, who was an orthodox professor of the Sorbonne, and preacher to Francis the First?

For other instances of Archbishop Magee's flagrant injustice and misrepresentation, I must refer to the "Examination of his charges against Unitarians and Unitarianism," by my learned and venerated friend Dr. Carpenter, who has found it only too easy to fill a volume with the exposure of a mere portion of them. I have purposely taken fresh examples, not hitherto noticed, so far as I know; and it may be supposed that the earlier gleaning by Dr. Carpenter would naturally yield the most remarkable results; so that the cases now adduced cannot be thought to be *peculiarly* unfavourable specimens.

If our reverend opponents, *having read this Prelate's work*, really think my charge against him, of "abuse the most coarse," an "unwarrantable attack on the reputation of the dead," I cannot hope to justify myself in their estimation: there must be an irremediable variance between their notion of "coarse abuse" and mine. I regret that

* Page 38. † Magee on the Atonement, vol. i. p. 170.

‡ Vol. iii. p. 57.

we cannot agree in a matter of taste which, to say the least, borders so closely on morals as to be scarcely distinguishable from them, and to be connected with the same strong feelings of approbation or disgust. With what levity must a writer sport with moral terms, what indistinct impressions must he have of moral qualities, who having pronounced an opponent (I quote the language of the Archbishop of Mr. Belsham) "*incapable of duplicity*,"* can yet proceed to charge him with "artifice and dishonesty,"† with "*huddling up* a matter,"‡ with "*filching away* a portion of evidence,"§ with "*direct violations of known truth*,"‖ and with "*bad faith*, unchecked by learning and unabashed by shame!"¶ I cannot wonder at the spirit pervading Mr. Byrth's letter to my friend and colleague Mr. Thom, when I find that he sees nothing coarse or abusive, but only the expression of "departed greatness," in accusing an opponent of "miserable stupidity,"** of "downright and irremediable nonsense,"†† of "proposing" a suggestion "(*as he* AVERS) with great diffidence,"‡‡ of furnishing "twenty-eight pages of the most extraordinary quagmire;"§§ in begging him to "rest assured, that to know the Greek language it must be learned;"‖‖ in proclaiming that he "stands in a pillory"¶¶ erected for him by a Bishop; that he belongs to "the family of Botherims in Morals and Metaphysics," and is "connected with that of Malaprops in Mathematics;"*** in ridiculing the idea of publishing his portrait;††† in asking him whether he has "lost his senses;"‡‡‡ and hinting that, whereas he knows not "how to choose *between two bundles*" of evidence, he is AN ASS.§§§ Are we to consider it a condescension in this distinguished Prelate, that he bends from his Episcopal dignity to console the Dissenting ministers in their "contemplation of the advantages of the national clergy," and assures them that they have "not only more of positive profit," but, "in addition to this," "the indulgence of vanity, and the gratification of spleen,—qualities which, time out of mind, have belonged to the family of *Dissent*;" nay, further, that in preparation for their ministry, they have a much lighter "outfit" "in point of expenditure," since among Nonconformists, in some cases at least, "the individual is his own University; confers his own degrees and orders; and has little more difficulty in the way of his vocation, than to find a new hat, a stout pony, and pair of saddle-bags."‖‖‖ This is very smart, no

* Vol ii. p. 387. † Vol. iii. p. 248. ‡ p. 203. § p. 210. ‖ p. 296.
¶ p. 249. ** p. 274. †† p. 239. ‡‡ p. 82. §§ p. 91.
‖‖ p. 132. ¶¶ p. 64. *** p. 242. ††† p. 275. ‡‡‡ p. 66.
§§§ p. 145. ‖‖‖ pp. 275, 276.

doubt; but does the Church exclude us from the Universities, that her Bishops may enjoy the entertainment of making us their laughing-stock, and inditing lampoons against us? Does she injure us first, that we may be insulted afterwards?

Mr. M'Neile speaks of the late Archbishop's work as "a barrier in the way of Unitarianism."* It is so; and if its influence were only that of fair argument, we should wish the barrier to stand in all its strength. But the book has become a standard authority for every kind of false and malignant impression respecting Unitarians, and prevents, instead of advancing, the knowledge of what we are. To be held up as entertaining "the *cool and deliberate purpose* of falsifying the word of God;"† as guilty of "machinations" to "subvert through *fraud* what had been found impregnable by force;"‡ as "staking" our "very salvation on the adoption of a reading which is against evidence;"§ as distinguished for "steady and immoveable effrontery,"‖ and "shameful disingenuousness;"¶ as discerning in our Lord "*that one* HATED *form on which we are terrified to look*;"** as so "determined to resist and subvert *one great truth*;" that we "set but little value on every other," and make a "*prevailing practice*" of "DIRECT AND DELIBERATE FALSEHOOD:"†† to be thus slandered by one, for whom his station and accomplishments have procured, from the party spirit of the age, a credit denied to any possible learning or excellence of ours; this, being a grievous wrong to the character of Christianity as much as to our own, we confess to be a trial hard to bear: and we may well feel like the good man under successful calumny, which wounds himself a little, but truth and virtue more. Meanwhile, injury may have its compensations; and since, to prove his accusations, even this distinguished Prelate had occasion to tamper with the evidence, we have a fresh presumption that our cause is one, against which learning and acuteness, under the restraints of justice, find themselves of no avail.

* Magee on the Atonement, Preface, p. vi.
† Vol. iii. p. 108.
‡ Vol. i. xii.
§ iii. 204.
‖ p. 47.
¶ p. 100.
** p. 67.
†† p. 57, 58.

THE

UNSCRIPTURAL ORIGIN

AND

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

OF

THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN

PARADISE STREET CHAPEL,

LIVERPOOL,

ON TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 1839.

BY

REV. JOHN HAMILTON THOM.

BEING THE SEVENTH OF A SERIES, TO BE DELIVERED WEEKLY, IN ANSWER TO A COURSE OF LECTURES AGAINST UNITARIANISM, IN CHRIST CHURCH, LIVERPOOL, BY THIRTEEN CLERGYMEN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

LIVERPOOL:

WILLMER AND SMITH, 32, CHURCH STREET.

LONDON:

JOHN GREEN, 121, NEWGATE STREET.

1839.

PREFACE.

THE Rev. D. James commences the Preface to his Lecture with these words: "Modern Unitarianism is a compound of Infidelity and Heresy." It would be very easy for me to say what modern *Trinitarianism* is, and to attach to it two epithets which Mr. James would relish no more than I do Infidelity and Heresy. It is evident, however, that this calling of names proves nothing but the unfitness of the mind which so indulges its *temper* and *feeling* to be engaged in *intellectual* and *argumentative* controversy. Does Mr. James expect to *convince* or *persuade* any Unitarians, by calling them Infidels and Heretics? The Christ Church method of Conversion is very well for Infallibles, who have only to denounce, and for "ordained Clergymen," who, with a simplicity of extravagance approaching the sublime, shrink from no consequences of their first principles, and boldly assert that the Holy Spirit is *their* Interpreter of Scripture,—but it displays a strange ignorance or contempt of the only avenues by which the minds of their fellow Christians can be approached, and of the moral and argumentative means by which alone conviction can be produced.

In what sense does Mr. James use the word 'Heresy,' in the sentence quoted? If in the sense of *error*, then is he of the infallible Church that he decides *authoritatively* on such points? If in the sense of *schism* and *division*, who does not know that the Creed-making Church is the Mother of the Sects, the fomentor of our religious strifes? With what grace or justice does that man call another an infidel, who is himself an infidel in respect to the primal and universal Revelation, and applies himself to blot out the divine signatures from the soul of man, and the material works of God? There is no infidelity so bad as this. The Apostle speaks of the law written on the heart, and of the Gentiles who had not the Jewish Law, being yet a

Law unto themselves, and the Psalmist speaks of the moral fidelity and constancy of God being shadowed forth by the unfailingness of His material Laws,—but Mr. James, who makes strange work with scripture, maintains in opposition to both Scripture and Philosophy, "the moral character and unity of God not discoverable from the works of Creation." I have been long prepared for this. Those who must maintain Trinitarianism have no other resource than to blot out the lights of the ORIGINAL REVELATION.* NATURE and the SOUL must be discredited if the Trinitarian Theology is to hold its place. This has been long evident to all who have watched the progress of knowledge, and the signs of the times. The works of God, and the oracles of the Soul, must be insulted, that the CHURCH, the CREED, and the PRIEST may remain.

I have referred but slightly to Mr. James's Lecture in the following pages, because I wished to build up an independent argument of great importance, and would not be led out of my way to answer reasonings and statements which, being answered, would leave the real controversy unaffected, and without a step of advancement. Nor could it be of much moment to discuss the CRITICISM that finds the Trinity in a Hebrew plural—the REASONING that, (in violation of one of the maxims of Philosophy, to attribute *no more* Causes than are adequate to the effects,) in the Works of an *Omnipotent* Creator finds in unity of Design no proof of Unity of Being—the SCRIPTURAL ARGUMENTATION that lays down the Mosaic Law of Vengeance, "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," *expressly condemned by Christ*, as unworthy even of *men*, as the morality of God himself, "the principle of eternal right, and the law of his own government"†—the transcendental METAPHYSICS that sees no difficulty in the infinite and omnipresent Deity becoming incarnate in a human frame, on the ground that "spirits occupy no space, and that thousands of them might be within a thimble, and the thimble on the finger of the seamstress, and her finger touch none of them."‡

There are, however, some statements in the Preface to Mr. James's Lecture, professing to be testimonies from Antiquity to the Trinitarian Doctrine, which demand some notice. To establish his inaccuracy I shall simply oppose to his statements the statements of Professor Burton.

1. "[The word Trinity] is found in the writings of Justin Martyr, who was converted to the Christian faith about the year of our Lord

* *Locke.* † Mr. James's Lecture, p. 410. ‡ Spoken, not printed.

140."—p. v. Mr. James mentions in a note that some divines dispute the authenticity of the work in which the word is found: but Mr. James is not one of those divines, for he proceeds to assert, that the passage in Justin Martyr "brings the use of the word within half a century of the apostolic age."

Now let us hear Dr. Burton.—"'*Theophili ad Autolycum*, lib. ii. c. 15.' I quote this passage, not on account of the sentiment which it contains, (for the allusion is sufficiently puerile,) but because it is the earliest passage (A. D. 180) in the works of any of the fathers, where we find the Greek word Τριας, *Trinity*: and we can thus prove that the term was applied to the three persons of the Trinity as early as toward the end of the second century.

"Theophilus had been giving an account of the creation, as described by Moses in the book of Genesis; and following that allegorical method of interpretation, which the fathers borrowed too freely from the schools of Alexandria, he extracts a hidden meaning from the fact of the heavenly bodies being created on the fourth day. 'In like manner also the three days, which preceded the luminaries, are types of the Trinity, of God, and his Word, and his Wisdom.'" Burton adds in a note—"This passage is overlooked by Suicer in his Thesaurus, v. Τριὰς, who very properly observes, that the *Expositio rectæ confessionis*, in which the word occurs, and which has been ascribed to Justin Martyr, *is later than that writer by some centuries.*"—*Theol. Works*, vol. ii. 2nd part, p. 34.

2. "The next who makes use of the word in his writings is Theophilus, a Gentile convert."—p. vi. Let us hear what Burton says of this Theophilus, and of his use of the word Trinity, *the first* who used it in such connection.

"Some doubts have been raised concerning the identity and date of Theophilus: but it seems to be generally agreed, that the person whose works have come down to us was the sixth bishop of Antioch, and was appointed to that see about the year 168. He tells us himself that he had been bred up in heathenism, and it is plain *that his language and thoughts retained a lasting impression from the Platonic philosophy.*"—p. 33.

"We perhaps ought not to infer from the words of Theophilus that the term Τριας had come in his day to bear the signification of a trinity in unity. He may have used it merely to express *three things*; and the *three days*, which he compares with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, might have been spoken of by him as τριὰς τῶν ἡμερῶν, a

triad, or *trinity of days*. In this sense Clement of Alexandria speaks of 'the holy triad, or trinity, faith, hope, and charity;' and Origen uses the terms τριὰς and τετρὰς for periods of three and four years respectively. Tertullian also, at the end of the second century, used the term *trinitas* in the same ordinary sense, for any three things.

"I would not therefore argue from the mere occurrence of the word in the writings of Theophilus, that τριας contained a signification of *unity*, as well as of *trinity*: but this much is at least evident, that Theophilus must have considered some resemblance, if not equality, to have existed between the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, or he would not have included them in the same type"—p. 38.

3. "Polycarp, a disciple of St. John, when at the stake, addressed a prayer to God, which he concluded in this manner:—'*For all things I praise thee, I bless thee, I glorify thee, together with the eternal and heavenly Jesus Christ: with whom, unto thee, and the Holy Spirit, be glory, both now and for ever, world without end. Amen.*'"—p. vii.

Professor Burton:—"Such are the concluding words of the prayer in the edition of Archbishop Usher: but Eusebius has quoted them differently, 'I glorify thee, through the eternal High Priest, Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son, through whom be glory to thee, with him in the Holy Ghost, both now and for evermore. Amen.'"

"The early orthodox writers," as Bishop Bull goes on to remark, "while they glorified the Father *through the Son*, intended to express the subordination of the Son, in his relation of Son, and the pre-eminence of the Father, in his relation of Father: but by adoring the Son *together with the Father*, they intended to express his being of one substance, and his existing in the same divine essence and nature with the Father."—"Theodoret informs us, that in the middle of the fourth century the clergy and people of Antioch were divided, some using the conjunction *and*, when they glorified the Son, (*i. e.*, saying *and to the Son*,) and others applying the preposition *through* to the Son, and *in* to the Holy Ghost. This was the period when the dispute concerning the form of doxology became general: and Philistorgius, the Arian historian, is speaking of the same time and place, when he says, 'Flavianus was the first person who used the words *Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost*, for before his time some had said, *Glory to the Father through the Son in the Holy Ghost*, which was the expression in most general use: and others *Glory to the Father in the Son and Holy Ghost*.'"—pp. 7, 8, 9.

"It is true that Eusebius appears to have found a different read-

ing in his copy of Polycarp's prayer: *and a critical question like this can never be demonstrably settled.*"—p. 13.

4. " [Justin Martyr] says—' HIM (the Father) and that SON who hath proceeded from him, and the PROPHETICAL SPIRIT, *we worship and adore.*' "—p. vii.

Where did Mr. James find this quotation? I shall supply some words which he has omitted, coming in between two clauses, which he has printed as *continuous* parts of the sentence. The omitted words supply a good test for *a fundamental principle* of Trinitarian interpretation, that of *equalizing* all persons joined together by the conjunctive conjunction. I shall give the *omitted words* in italics.

" Justin is answering the charge of atheism, which was brought against the Christians, and observes, that they were punished for not worshipping evil demons, which were not really gods. ' Hence it is that we are called atheists: and we confess that we are atheists with respect to such reputed Gods as these: but not with respect to the true God, the Father of justice, temperance, and every other virtue, with whom is no mixture of evil. But Him, and the Son who came from him, and gave us this instruction, *and the host of the other good angels which attend upon and resemble them,* and the prophetic spirit, we worship and adore, paying them a reasonable and true honour, and not refusing to deliver to any one else, who wishes to be taught, what we ourselves have learnt.' "

After such careless quotations, to say the best of them, I am not surprised to find Mr. James, with singular self-devotion, placing himself beside Mr. Byrth, to share the condemnation that falls upon injurious representations, not only unproved, but disproved. Mr. James speaks of the *Unitarian crime* of distorted representations, as proved by Mr. Byrth. Mr. James may make common cause with Mr. Byrth, if he is unwise enough to do so; but I can assure him that his own burden is heavy enough to bear, without encumbering himself with any portion of another's.

To the greatest part of his quotations Mr. James has given no reference, so that it is impossible to verify them. If he is correct, he has been more fortunate in some cases than Professor Burton. I should be glad to have the means of testing his extracts from Origen. He ought to have stated, that both Bishop Bull and Dr. Priestley, when speaking of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, never confounded the Trinity of these Fathers with the Post-Nicene Trinity, or with modern Orthodoxy.

Nothing can be more unphilosophical than the manner in which testimonies to modern opinions have been found in the Fathers. Any words that will *bear* the sense have been pushed forward as authorities. No distinction has been made between the ideas *suggested* by the words to *modern readers*, and the ideas of the writers originally suggesting the words. The *suggested* and the *suggesting* ideas would be found strangely different. Whoever wishes to have clear ideas on this question, the opinions of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, and the origin of the Trinity, should read the portions of Cudworth's Intellectual System that bear upon the subject.

LECTURE VII.

THE UNSCRIPTURAL ORIGIN AND ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

BY REV. JOHN HAMILTON THOM.

"THE FATHER THAT DWELLETH IN ME, HE DOETH THE WORKS."—*John* xiv. 10.

IT is a profound observation of Professor Dugald Stewart, that you never destroy an error until you have traced it to its sources, until you have accounted for its origin. A popular doctrine, full of life in the strong faith of those who hold it, cannot be encountered at the height of its power, and struck down at once by an argument; the world is apt to take for granted that whatever is widely believed must have some roots in truth, and you must go up the stream of opinion, if you would gradually remove this idea so supporting to error, of its strength and fulness, stripping away the impressions of magnitude as you ascend, until at last you have left all the strength behind you, and have come to where you can contemplate, undeceived, the weak and miserable beginnings of the turbid flood. Were some Grecian idolater to have followed the gliding steps of his river God, until his majestic movements were shortened into the tricklings of the mountain spring, if the deity did not entirely disappear, it would at least have changed its form, and melted into the minor nymph of the Fountain.

Whenever we encounter the doctrine of the Trinity, as it is received at the present day, and attempt to arrest it by the

strength of Reason and the strength of Scripture, the flood is too strong for us, the faith of the world flows upon the current, and we are swept aside as things that had vainly interposed to intercept the rushings of some mighty tide. We must travel up to the first droppings if we would demonstrate the derived nature of this now full stream of faith. If the ascent terminates before it reaches Christ and the Apostles, then its origin is not Scriptural but Ecclesiastical; its fountain is not in the depths of the nature of God, but in the airy speculations of the vain philosophy of man.

My subject is entitled "The unscriptural Origin and Ecclesiastical History of the Doctrine of the Trinity." I shall invert the order of these topics. I shall show first *where it has its origin*, that we may be saved the unnecessary toil of straining and distorting our vision, in searching for it where it is not to be found. If I can exhibit its birth in Ecclesiastical history, this will so far be a proof that it had no previous birth in Evangelical History. If I can cut it off from the living fountain of Revelation, and show it proceeding from other springs, this will so far be a proof that it is human and not divine. The positive assertion contained in my title, if established, will establish also the negative portion of it:—for the Ecclesiastical rise and progress of the Trinity are the negation of its Scriptural origin.

Christianity was originally delivered to Jews; and the question naturally arises, how could their pure theism ever assume the Trinitarian modification of Unity; how, to use the early language of this Controversy, could the MONARCHY ever be diluted into the ECONOMY, if it had not been constrained to adopt this form by the overpowering distinctness of a Revelation? Now we are able to prove that the Jewish Christians never did accept the doctrine of the deity of Christ; that on this account they are classed with Heretics by the Greek and Latin Fathers, under the names of Nazarenes and Ebionites; and that not until after the Gospel passed

out of the keeping of the Apostles, and, cut off from its Jewish spring, was cast into the midst of the Gentile world, to modify and to be modified, did it come into contact with Heathen Philosophy, and slowly take the impress of its spirit.

There were two very marked divisions of the Jewish people, under widely different influences of Religion and Philosophy, and not acquainted, perhaps, with the same language,—the Jews of Palestine, and the Jews of Egypt. The Jews of Palestine, sheltered from commerce with the world, more by their unsocial Faith, than by the deep and quiet vallies of their sequestered land, partook little of the spirit of the Times, and imparted to it nothing; and though after the Babylonish Captivity, Gentile Philosophy had tinctured and in some sense expanded their religious views, yet when they returned again to their homes that influence was cut off, the living connection was no longer maintained, and its effects were rather traditionary mixtures, than seeds of progress.

In contrast with the insulated life of the Jews of Palestine, the Jews of Alexandria lived in the very centre of the world's freshest ideas—their dwelling was the mart of nations—and Grecian and Oriental Philosophy met together in their far-famed Schools, and mingled their Wisdom. "The arms of the Macedonians," says Gibbon, "diffused over Asia and Egypt the language and learning of Greece; and the theological system of Plato (before Christ, 360) was taught, with less reserve, and perhaps with some improvements, in the celebrated School of Alexandria. A numerous colony of Jews had been invited, by the favour of the Ptolemies, to settle in their new capital. While the bulk of the nation practised their legal ceremonies, and pursued the lucrative operations of Commerce, a few Hebrews, of a more liberal spirit, devoted their lives to religious and philosophical contemplation. They cultivated with diligence, and embraced

with [illegible] the theological system of the Athenian Sage. But their national pride would have been mortified by a fair confession of their former poverty; and they boldly marked, as the sacred inheritance of their ancestors, the gold and jewels which they had so lately stolen from their Egyptian masters. One hundred years before the birth of Christ, a philosophical treatise, which manifestly betrays the style and sentiments of the School of Plato, was produced by the Alexandrian Jews, and unanimously received as a genuine and valuable relic of the inspired Wisdom of Solomon. A similar union of the Mosaic faith and the Grecian philosophy, distinguishes the works of Philo, which were composed for the most part under the reign of Augustus. The material soul of the Universe might offend the piety of the Hebrews: but they applied the character of the Logos to the Jehovah of Moses and the patriarchs; and the Son of God was introduced upon earth under a visible, and even human appearance, to perform those familiar offices which seem incompatible with the nature and attributes of the Universal cause."*

It is not necessary that I should inquire here with great accuracy into the nature of the Trinity as taught by Plato. I think it is most probable that Plato's Trinity was a Trinity of Attributes rather than a Trinity of Persons; that it corresponded rather with Sabellianism than with the Orthodox form of the Doctrine. This is a question, however, on which it is impossible to speak with certainty, owing, partly, to the nature of the ideas which constitute this compound conception of Deity, and partly to the gorgeous style of the imaginative metaphysician, whose figures we hardly know whether we are to harden into Realities, or to fuse into Ideas. Authorities are divided upon this point—and we have the name of Cudworth upon the one side, and the scarcely less illustrious one of Guizot upon the other. Whatever may

* Milman's Edition, vol. iii. p. 311.

have been the view of Plato himself,* it is certain that before Christ, his followers, some of the purer of the later Platonists, as they are called, taught a doctrine of the Trinity exactly corresponding to the form in which it was established nearly three hundred years after the death of our Saviour, by the first General Council of the Christian Church. The Platonists contemplated one original fountain of being, a simple unity, "which virtually containeth all things," from whence all other things, whether temporal or eternal, whether created or uncreated, were altogether derived. This Monad or Unity the Platonists considered as the only absolute or perfect existence, superior to intellect or wisdom, (Logos) for these two reasons—first, because Intellect being concerned with ideas, implies numbers and multiplicity; whereas the Supreme is UNITY; and secondly, that because "Knowledge is not the highest good, there must be some substantial thing in order of Nature superior to Intellect." In the same way that GOODNESS and UNITY, the properties of the self-existent God, were supposed to be superior to Mind or Wisdom, the second principle, so in its turn Intellect was supposed to be superior to the moving spirit or energy which carried ideas (the ideas of the Logos) into Action. The Monad, or Supreme Unity, generated Intellect, and Intellect as containing the intelligible ideas or archetypes of all sensible things, generated Soul or the spirit of Action. Hence the Platonic Trinity: THE ONE GOOD; Intellect (LOGOS OR NOUS); PSYCHE, or operating energy.† In Platonic lan-

* "That this Trinity (Monad or Good, Wisdom, Spirit or Energy) was not first of all a mere invention of Plato's, but much ancienter than him, is plainly affirmed by Plotinus in these words,—'That these doctrines are not new nor of yesterday, but have been very anciently delivered, though obscurely (the discourses now extant being but Explications of them) appears from PLATO'S own writings; PARMENIDES before having insisted on them.'" *Cudworth. Intel. Syst.* p. 546.—See also Bishop Berkeley's Siris, sections 341-365.

† "The principle of every thing is more simple than the thing itself. Wherefore the sensible world was made from Intellect, or the intelligible; and before this must there needs be something more simple still. For many did not proceed from many, but this multiform thing Intellect proceeded from that which is not multiform

guage, the FIRST in this Trinity is said to be *All things Unitively*; the SECOND, *All things intellectually*; and the THIRD, *All things actively or productively*. I shall give one example of the style of the Platonists in expressing these Trinitarian conceptions. It is exactly that which the earlier Fathers would have used when speaking of the Christian Trinity. "That which is always perfect generates what is Eternal, and that which it generates is always less than itself. What shall we say therefore of the most absolutely perfect Being of all. Does that produce nothing from itself? Or rather, does it not produce the greatest of all things after it? Now the greatest of all things after the most absolutely perfect Being is Mind or Intellect; and this is Second to it. For Mind beholdeth this as its Father, and standeth in need of nothing else besides it; whereas that First Principle standeth in need of no (Logos) Mind or Intellect. What is generated from that which is better than Mind, must needs be Mind or Intellect, because Mind is better than all other things, they being all in order of nature after it, and junior to it; as PSYCHE itself, or the First Soul; for this is also the Word or Energy of Mind (Logos), as that is the Word or Energy of the First Good.* Perfect Intellect," (Logos, the second in the Trinity,) "generates Soul" (Psyche, or Moving Spirit, the third in the Platonic Trinity), "and it being perfect must needs generate, for so great a Power could not remain steril. But that which

but simple; as Number from Unity. If that which understands be many, or contain multitude in it, then that which contains no multitude, does not properly understand; and this is the first thing;—to understand is not the First; neither in Essence nor in Dignity; but the Second; a thing in order of nature, after the First Good, and springing up from thence, as that which is moved with desire towards it."—*Plotinus. Cudworth*, p. 584.

* "The FIRST is above all manner of action: neither is it fit to attribute the architecture of the world to the First God, but rather to account him the Father of that God, *who is the Artificer*. The SECOND, to whom the energy of Intellection is attributed, is therefore properly called the Demiurgus, as the contriving Architect, in whom the Archetypal World is contained, and the First Pattern, or Paradigm of the Whole Universe. The THIRD is that which moveth about Mind or Intellect, the Light or Effulgency thereof, and its Print or Signature, which always

is here begotten also, cannot be greater than its Begetter; but must needs be Inferior to it, as being the Image thereof." —(*Plotinus. Cudworth*, p. 580.)

Now to connect such speculations as these with Gentile Christianity we have the intermediate link of the Platonizing or Alexandrian Jews. About two hundred years before Christ the Hebrew Scriptures were made accessible to Grecian curiosity through the medium of the Septuagint Translation: and when comparison came to be instituted between the wisdom of their Sacred Books, and the wisdom of the Schools, a strong temptation came into force upon the Jewish Platonists, by a system of allegory and fanciful interpretation to make their Scriptures divulge recondite doctrines, and by such imaginative means to metamorphose its simplest statements into the likeness of the deep and mysterious teachings of Philosophy. Hence arose the whole system of allegorizing which prevailed so extensively among the Jews of Alexandria. They were under two sets of influences, an affection for the Platonic or Eclectic Philosophy of their Schools, and a jealousy for their Religion that made them shrink from the idea that any Philosophy should contain secrets not there divulged.* They combined these two affections, and made

dependeth upon it, and acteth according to it. This is that which reduces both the Fecundity of the First Simple Good, and the Architectonick Contrivance of the Second into Act and Energy. This is the Immediate and as it were *Manuary Opificer* of the whole world, that which actually Governs, Rules, and Presideth over all."—*Plotinus. ap. Cudw.* p. 583.

* "Since the introduction of the Greek or Chaldean Philosophy, the Jews were persuaded of the pre-existence, transmigration, and immortality of souls; and Providence was justified by a supposition, that they were confined in their earthly prisons to expiate the stains which they had contracted in a former state. But the degrees of purity and corruption are almost immeasurable. It might be fairly presumed that the most sublime and virtuous of human spirits was infused into the offspring of Mary and the Holy Ghost; that his abasement was the result of his voluntary choice; and that the object of his mission was to purify, not his own, but the sins of the world. On his return to his native skies he received the immense reward of his obedience; the everlasting kingdom of the Messiah, which had been darkly foretold by the prophets, under the carnal images of peace, of conquest, and of dominion. Omnipotence could enlarge the human faculties of

their Scriptures speak the language of the Schools by means of the transforming process of allegorical interpretation. Examples without end might be given of the most extravagant transfigurations of the events of Hebrew History.

As a preparation for the manner of speaking on these subjects afterwards adopted by the earlier Christian Trinitarians, I will extract one passage, which perhaps most faithfully represents the purer views of Philo of Alexandria, the most eminent of the Jewish Platonizers, and whose influence operating upon Christianity through the minds of the Gentile philosophical believers, is to this day felt upon the popular forms of our faith. I have only to premise that he is speaking of the Attributes of God abstractly from God himself; and though it is more than probable that Philo as well as Plato never separated these Attributes from the Supreme Deity, still it was the necessary tendency of such personifications to harden into distinct persons, and with common minds personified Attributes very soon came to be considered as Real Beings. This then was the original source of the Christian Trinity. To keep the lofty and retired Essence of God apart from all contact with matter which was looked upon as evil, and from number which was looked upon as imperfect, the Powers of God were first considered as Ema-

Christ to the extent of his celestial office. In the language of antiquity, the title of God has not been severely confined to the first parent; and his incomparable minister, his only begotten son, might claim, without presumption, the religious, though secondary worship of a subject world.

" The seeds of the faith, which had slowly arisen in the rocky and ungrateful soil of Judea, were transplanted, in full maturity, to the happier climes of the Gentiles; and the strangers of Rome or Asia, who never beheld the manhood, were the more readily disposed to embrace the divinity of Christ. The polytheist and the philosopher, the Greek and the Barbarian, were alike accustomed to conceive a long succession, an infinite chain of angels or dæmons, or deities, or æons, or emanations, issuing from the throne of light. Nor could it seem strange or incredible, that the first of these æons, the *Logos*, or word of God, of the same substance with the Father, should descend upon earth, to deliver the human race from vice and error, and to conduct them in the path of life and immortality.—*Gibbon*, vol. viii. p. 271.

nations from Him by successive generation—INTELLECT proceeding from the ONE GOOD, and operating ENERGY or SPIRIT proceeding from Intellect (Logos) to consummate its Ideas, and then gradually came to be separated from Him, by a very natural process of philosophic deteriorations, and to be fixed down into independent personalities. With these explanations I now quote from Philo. He belonged to the age of Christ, but was born some time anterior to the Christian era: Brucker says twenty years. Philo is allegorizing the appearance of the three angels to Abraham, into a threefold manifestation of the One God: "The FATHER is in the middle of all, who in Holy Scripture is by a peculiar name styled THE BEING [HE WHO IS]: and on each side are [two] most ancient Powers next to THE BEING, whereof one is called the Effective (creative Power) and the other Royal; and the Effective, GOD, for by this [the Father] made and adorned the Universe; and the Royal, LORD, for it is fit he should rule and govern what he has made. Being therefore attended on both sides with his Powers, to a discerning understanding he appears one while to be ONE, and another while to be THREE. ONE when the mind being in the highest degree purified, and passing over not only a multitude of numbers, but also that which is next to an Unit," (the Monad) "the number of two," (the other two, Logos and Psyche) "endeavours after a simple and uncompounded Idea, perfect of itself: and THREE, when not as yet sufficiently exercised in great mysteries, it busies itself about lesser, and is not able to conceive THE BEING, [HE WHO IS,] without any other, of itself, but by his Works, and either as creating or governing." *

Such, then, were the prevalent modes of Conception at the time when the Gospel passed out of the hands of strictly Jewish interpreters, and came to be inspected by the eyes of

* Philo de Abrahamo. Le Clerc's Supplement to Hammond, p. 168.

Gentile Philosophers. With more or less purity of conception, all the Platonists personified the divine Attributes; and some of them represented these personified Attributes as distinct Existences, not hesitating to speak of a second God, though holding him to be derived and dependent. There is no trace among the purer Platonists of any belief of three co-equal Gods, each possessing within himself the fullness of Deity, yet mysteriously united. The second and third persons in the Platonic Trinity were carefully represented as derived, dependent, and subordinate, under the similitudes of the stream and the fountain, the branch and the vine, the sun and its outshining effulgence; the relation between them being like that of three apparent Suns,—"two of them being but the *parhelii* of the other, and essentially dependent on it: for as much as the second would be but the reflected Image of the first, and the third but the second refracted." *

Now it so happened that the Apostle John, living at Ephesus, "the centre of the mingling opinions of the East and West," made use of this term "Logos" as already familiar to those for whom he wrote, and with the purpose of impressing upon the word the higher and purer meaning attached to it by the Jews of Palestine; wresting it from the philosophical to the strictly Jewish or Christian sense. Nothing could be more natural than that the Apostle should adopt the style of the philosophic schools in the midst of which he wrote, especially since it was not peculiar to them, but already in use among the Jews; and that endeavouring to connect truth with familiar modes of speaking, he should attempt to infuse into the word the more spiritual ideas with which it was already associated in his own language.

"St. John," says Guizot, "was a Jew, born and educated in Palestine; he would naturally, then, attach to the word *Logos* the sense attached to it by the Jews of Palestine.

* Cudworth, p. 590.

Closely examined, the ideas which he gives of the *Logos* cannot agree with those of Philo and the school of Alexandria; they correspond, on the contrary, with those of the Jews of Palestine. Perhaps St. John, employing a well known term to explain a doctrine which was yet unknown, has slightly altered the sense: it is this alteration which we appear to discover on comparing different passages of his writings. It is worthy of remark, that the Jews of Palestine, who did not perceive this alteration, could find nothing extraordinary in what St. John said of the Logos; at least they comprehended it without difficulty; while the Greeks and Grecising Jews, on their parts, brought to it prejudices and preconceptions easily reconciled with those of the Evangelist, who did not expressly contradict them. This circumstance must have much favoured the progress of Christianity. Thus the fathers of the Church, in the two first centuries and later, formed almost all in the school of Alexandria, gave to the Logos of St. John a sense nearly similar to that which it received from Philo.* Their doctrine approached very near to that which, in the fourth century, the Council of Nice condemned in the person of Arius."†

It would not be possible, within my present limits, to trace, with a minute accuracy, how the Logos of the schools be-

* "It was in this mode of apprehending the Divine Being that the doctrine of the Trinity had its origin. The Logos of the first four centuries was in the view of the Fathers both an attribute or attributes of God, and a proper person. Their philosophy was, in general, that of the later Platonists, and they transferred from it into Christianity this mode of Conception. In treating of this fact, so strange, and one which will be so new to many of my readers, I will first quote a passage from Origen, the coincidence of which with the conceptions of Philo and the later Platonists is apparent. 'Nor must we omit, that Christ is properly the Wisdom of God; and is therefore so denominated. For the wisdom of the God and Father of All has not its being in bare conceptions, analogous to the conceptions in human minds. But if any one be capable of forming an idea of *an incorporeal being of diverse forms of thought, which comprehend the* LOGOI [the archetypal forms] *of all things, a being indued with life, and having as it were a soul*, he will know that the Wisdom of God, who is above every creature, pronounced rightly concerning herself; The Lord created me, the beginning, his way to his works.'"—*Origen, Opp.* iv. 39, 40,—quoted by Norton on the Trinity, p. 271-2.

† *Milman's Gibbon*, vol. iii. p. 313.

came connected with the Logos of the Gospel; and afterwards, under the necessity of adjusting these conceptions with the nominal Unity of God, changed its form into the present theory of the Trinity. It will readily be imagined that the Gentile Christians, accustomed to associate ideas of external power with their Deities, and at the same time to contemplate them in connection with humanity, would shrink from the bare and unclothed conception of the crucified Jesus; would endeavour to throw around their new faith a mystic splendour that might protect it from the ridicule of Heathen scoffers, and naturally seize upon means so obvious, the language offered by St. John, and the ideas offered by their own philosophy, to connect the pre-existent soul of Jesus not with Humanity, but with God. In this way they could remove the shame and odium of the cross, that stumbling block to the Jews, and to the Greeks foolishness. We little realize with what distaste and abhorrence a Hebrew looking for the Messiah, and a Philosopher speculating on the nature of the divine Emanations that were the Mediators between God and men, would contemplate the despised Galilean executed as a malefactor. Neither do we realize, as we ought to do in this connection, the magnanimity of Paul: "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified;" so much has the technical jargon of theology overcast the moral sublimity of the Apostle's spiritual meaning.

I shall now, with as much distinctness as a subject purely literary will admit, attempt to exhibit to you the gradual transformations, by which these Conceptions slowly assumed the present orthodox form of the doctrine of the Trinity. If this had been a doctrine of Revelation, it would, of course, have been perfect at once; but arising out of accidental circumstances and accidental ideas, it naturally required many fresh adjustments to make it consistent with itself, and to protect it, by skilfully chosen words, against all the troublesome attacks of theological ingenuity. This was not the work of a

moment nor of a century,—hundreds of years passed over before the doctrine assumed any fixed form; nor was it until the thirteenth century that the present form of the doctrine of three Gods, numerically one, was authoritatively decreed.* Those who tell us of an "unimproved and unimprovable Revelation," must surely be strangely ignorant of the history of Trinitarian Theology.

There are three Creeds of the Church of England, each of them to be referred to distinct Periods of Ecclesiastical History, and becoming more Unitarian in proportion as we approach the Apostolical times, more Trinitarian in proportion as we recede from those times. These three Creeds I shall make serve as heads under which to introduce my proofs of the rise and progress of the Trinitarian Doctrine.

The *first* Creed is UNITARIAN. It was the only Creed known to the Church for three hundred and twenty-five years.

The *second* Creed is *partly* TRINITARIAN, fixing the Deity of Christ, but saying nothing of the Deity of the Holy Spirit.

The *third* Creed contains Trinitarianism, though not in its final and perfected, yet in its boldest and most extravagant, forms.

The first Creed is known by the name of the Apostles' Creed. It is not known by whom it was written, nor when it was written;† but though we have no verbatim copy of it until after the Nicene Council, but only more or less of the substance, and some of its clauses are evidently of a later date, it may substantially be regarded as descriptive of the faith of the

* See Cudworth, p. 603, 4.

† "The creed which was first adopted, and that perhaps in the very earliest age, by the Church of Rome, was that which is now called the Apostles' Creed, and it was the general opinion, from the fourth century downwards, that it was actually the production of those blessed persons assembled for that purpose. Our evidence is not sufficient to establish that fact, and some writers very confidently reject it. But there is reasonable ground for our assurance that the form of faith which we still repeat and inculcate was in use and honour in the very early propagation of our religion."—*Waddington's History of the Church*, p. 27.

Church at an early age.* "The Christian system," says Mosheim, "as it was hitherto taught, preserved its native and beautiful simplicity, and was comprehended in a small number of articles. The public teachers inculcated no other doctrines than those that are contained in what is commonly called the Apostles' Creed; and in the method of illustrating them, all vain subtleties, all mysterious researches, everything that was beyond the reach of common capacities, was carefully avoided. This will by no means appear surprising to those who consider that, at this time, there was not the least controversy about those capital doctrines of Christianity which were afterwards so keenly debated in the Church; and who reflect that the bishops of those primitive times were, for the most part, plain and illiterate men, remarkable rather for their piety and zeal than for their learning and eloquence."—(*Eccles. Hist.* cent. ii. p. 11. ch. 3.)

Here, then, is the FIRST CREED of the Church, long reverenced as a formula drawn up by the Apostles themselves, and perhaps still by some unwittingly honoured as such. It contains some departures from the simplicity of Gospel language, as in creed-making must necessarily happen; for creeds are required only by those for whom the Scriptures are not sufficiently definite or sufficiently safe. So far as it is a Confession of faith, it demonstrates that the belief of the primitive Church was strictly UNITARIAN.

The Apostles' Creed.

I believe in GOD (or, as the earlier notices of this Creed have it, "in *one* God," also, "*one only* God the Father Almighty,") the FATHER ALMIGHTY, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried:

* "Ignatius, Justin, and Irenæus make no mention of it, but they occasionally *repeat some words* contained in it, which is *held* as *proof* that they knew it by heart."—*Waddington.*

he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of GOD, the FATHER ALMIGHTY: from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead: I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

From the various transformations of this Creed in the pages of Ecclesiastical writers, it is evident that it was not a fixed but a growing formula, and that additions were freely made to it according as the heresies of the time might seem to require the introduction of a new clause. One thing, however, is plain, that the Ages which had their faith stated in this creed had not yet confounded Jesus with God; that he who is simply and solely described as the Son of God, crucified and dying, rising from the grave, and sitting now on the right hand of the Father Almighty, was not yet exalted into the Second Person of the Trinity, equal to God in all things.

Now it is not a little remarkable, that many orthodox writers perceived and deplored the lamentable deficiency of this faith of the primitive Church; and some of them boldly declare, that the Christian Fathers were not yet initiated in these high mysteries. "M. Jurieu," quoted by Jortin, "whose zeal against heresy is well known, assures us that the fundamental articles of Christianity were not understood by the Fathers of the three first centuries; that the true system began to be modelled into some shape by the Nicene bishops, and was afterwards immensely improved and beautified by the following synods and councils." *

Bishop Bull declares, "that almost all the Catholic writers before Arius' time seem not to have known any thing of the invisibility and immensity of the Son of God; and that they

* Jortin, Eccles. Hist. vol. ii. p. 180.

often speak of him in such a manner as if, even in respect of his divine nature, he was *finite, visible,* and *circumscribed in place.*" Such sentiments are only to be paralleled by some passages from these Fathers themselves, who declare that such notions as they had of the divinity of Christ they had derived solely from the Gospel of St. John, and that the other Evangelists had but an obscure knowledge of this subject. "None of them," says Origen, "disclosed his divinity so purely as John."* "John," says Eusebius, "commenced with the doctrine of the divinity, that having been reserved by the divine Spirit for him as the most worthy." † And, later, Chrysostom declares that the other Evangelists were like "little children, who hear, but do not understand what they hear, being occupied with cakes and childish playthings;" but John taught, "what the angels themselves did not know before he declared it." "This doctrine was not published at first, for the world was not advanced to it. Matthew, Mark, and Luke did not state what was suitable to his dignity, but what was fitting for their hearers. John, the Son of Thunder, advanced at last to the doctrine of the divinity."‡

I shall now cite some proofs from the Christian writers of the three first centuries, to show that though, in correspondence with Platonic doctrines, a derived and subordinate divinity was ascribed to Jesus, nothing like the present orthodox faith was dreamed of, and that the highest authorities on these subjects, Cudworth for instance, are fully aware that, for nearly four hundred years, the Creeds of the Church embraced nothing more than the Platonic Trinity.

And, first, I shall give one distinct testimony from Origen, to which others might be added from Irenæus and Tertullian, of the *Unitarianism of the Jewish Christians*:

"And when you consider the faith concerning our Saviour

* Comment. in Johan. vol. ii. p. 5. † Hist. lib. iii. c. 24.
‡ Chrys. Op. vol. vi. p. 171; viii. p. 2

of those of the Jews who believe in Jesus, some thinking him to be the son of Joseph and Mary, and others of Mary only, and the divine Spirit, but still without any belief in his divinity."* "*And they of the Jews who have received Jesus as the Christ,* go by the name of Ebionites."†

I am next to cite evidence that, for the first three hundred years, the Christian writers acknowledged *the inferiority of Jesus to his* FATHER, though ascribing to him a derived divinity. It is not until A. D. 140 that we find any very distinct mention even of this description of divinity as belonging to Jesus.‡

Justin Martyr, A. D. 140.

"I will endeavour to show that he who appeared to Abraham, Jacob, and Moses, and who is called God, is different from the God that made all things,—*numerically* different, though not *in will*; for I say that he never did any thing but what that GOD WHO MADE ALL THINGS, and above whom there is no god, *willed* that he should do and say."§

Irenæus, A.D. 178.

"We hold the Rule of Truth, that there is ONE GOD ALMIGHTY, who created all things by his Logos."... "This is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and of Him it is that Paul declared, There is ONE GOD, even the FATHER, who is above all, and through all, and in us all."‖

Clemens Alexandrinus, A.D. 194.

"There is one unbegotten almighty FATHER, and one first

* Comm. in Matt. sec. 161. † In Celsum. lib. ii. p. 56.

‡ Professor Burton gives some instances of the use of the word God by Ignatius, A. D. 107, in connection with Christ. Nothing can be more slender and insufficient than his other evidences of the recognition of these doctrines by the Apostolical Fathers.

§ Dial. cum Tryph. p. 252. ‖ Lib. i. cap. 19; ii. cap. 3.

begotten, by whom all things were, and without whom nothing was made. For one is truly God, who made the beginning of all things, meaning his first-begotten son."*

Tertullian, A.D. 200.

"I do not speak of Gods and Lords; but I follow the Apostle; so that if the Father and the Son are to be named together, I call the Father God, and Jesus Christ Lord: though I can call Christ God when speaking of himself alone." And he goes on to explain this by declaring, that a ray of the sun may, with sufficient propriety, be called the sun.†

Origen, A.D. 230.

"We may by this means solve the doubts which terrify many men, who pretend to great piety, and who are afraid of making two Gods, and, through this, fall into vain and impious opinions; denying that the nature of the Son is different from that of the Father, and who acknowledge that he is God in name only; or denying the divinity of the Son, and then maintaining that his nature and essence is different from that of the Father. For we must tell them that he who is *God of himself*, is THE God, as the Saviour states in his prayer to the Father, 'that they may know thee, THE only true God;' but that whosoever becomes divine by partaking of his divinity, cannot be styled THE God, but *a* God, among whom *especially is the first born of all creatures.*"‡

Novatian, A.D. 251.

"He, although he was in the form of God, did not think of the robbery of being equal with God. For though he knew that he was God, from God the Father, he never likened or compared himself with God the Father, remembering that

* Strom. lib. vi. p. 644. Priestley's Hist. Early Opinions.
† Advers. Prax. c. 13.
‡ Comment. vol. ii. p. 47.

he was from the Father, and that he had what he had because the Father had given it to him."*

Lactantius, A.D. 310.

"He showed his fidelity to God, in that he taught that there is ONE GOD, and that he alone ought to be worshipped. Nor did he ever say that he himself was God. For he would not have preserved his fidelity if, being sent to take away a number of gods, and to assert ONE GOD, he had introduced another besides that one. Wherefore, because he was so faithful, because he arrogated nothing to himself, that he might fulfil the commands of Him who sent him, he *received* the dignity of perpetual priest, and the honour of Supreme King, the power of a judge, and the title of God." †

And not inconveniently to multiply evidence, let us come at once to the very orthodox Athanasius himself, and we shall find how little this Father knew of the nice adjustments of that Creed which now passes under his name.

Athanasius, A.D. 325.

"For there is one God, and there is not another besides Him. When it is said that the Father is the only God, that he is one God, 'I am the FIRST,' and 'I am the LAST,' it is well said. This is not said, however, to take away from the Son; for he also is *in* THE ONE, FIRST, and ONLY ONE, as being the only *Logos*, Wisdom, and Effulgence of him who is THE ONE, and THE ALONE, and THE SUPREME."‡

"And Athanasius himself, who is commonly accounted the very Rule of Orthodoxality in this point, when he doth so often resemble the Father to the *Sun*, or the *original Light*; and the Son to the *splendour or brightness of it*, (as likewise doth the Nicene Council and the Scripture itself,) he seems hereby to imply some dependence of the Second upon the

* Cap. ii. p. 84. † Lib. iv. sec. 14.
‡ Orat. iii. con. Arian.

First, and subordination to it. Especially when he declareth, that the *Three Persons* of the *Trinity* are not to be looked upon as *Three Principles*, nor to be resembled to *Three Suns*, but to the *Sun*, and its splendour, and *its derivative light*."*

Now I may sum up the impression of these passages in the words of the very learned Cudworth:—"But particularly as to their gradual subordination of the *Second Hypostasis* to the *First*, and of the *Third* to the *First and Second*, our Platonick Christian doubtless would therefore plead them the more excusable, because the generality of *Christian Doctors*, for the first three hundred years after the Apostles' times, plainly asserted the same; as Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Tatianus, Irenæus, the Author of the Recognitions, Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Gregorius Thaumaturgus, Dionysius of Alexandria, Lactantius, and many others. All whose testimonies, because it would be too tedious to set down here, we shall content ourselves with one of the last mentioned;—'Both the Father and Son is God: but he as it were an exuberant fountain, this as a stream derived from him: He like to the sun, this like to a ray extended from the sun.' And though it be true, that Athanasius, writing against the Arians, does appeal to the tradition of the antient Church, and amongst others cites Origen's testimony too; yet this was only for the Eternity and Divinity of the Son of God, but not at all for such an absolute *co-equality* of him with the Father as would exclude all *dependence, subordination*, and *inferiority*;† those antients so

* Cudworth. Intel. Sys. p. 599.

† Inattention to this distinction vitiates the whole reasonings of Dr. Burton's learned work on the Anti-Nicene Fathers. There is no doubt that the deity of the Son and even of the Holy Ghost is spoken of before the Council of Nice, but always in the Platonic or derived sense, never in the present orthodox sense of *co-equal* and *independent*. The word con-substantial proves nothing to the contrary, for a Platonist would not have objected to the application of the word to the second and third persons in his Trinity, as partaking of, or derived from the Essence of the one Supreme. See Cudworth's argument to this effect (Intel. Sys.

unanimously agreeing therein, that they are by Petavius therefore taxed for Platonism, and having by that means corrupted the purity of the Christian Faith, in this article of the Trinity. Which how it can be reconciled with those other opinions, of Ecclesiastic Tradition being a Rule of Faith, and impossibility of the visible Churches erring in any fundamental point, cannot easily be understood. However, this general Tradition, or Consent of the Christian Church, for three hundred years together after the Apostles' times, though it cannot justify the Platonists in anything discrepant from the Scripture, yet may it in some measure doubtless plead their excuse, who had no Scripture Revelation at all to guide them herein; and so at least make their error more tolerable or pardonable." *

We come now to a time when these floating and indefinite conceptions were to assume more fixed forms. It is apparent that so far the Christian Fathers fluctuated between their desire to exalt Jesus into the Logos of God, and the restraining fear of adopting ideas or expressions not reconcilable with the strict unity of the Deity. "The suspense and fluctuation," says Gibbon, "produced in the minds of the Christians by these opposite tendencies, may be observed in the writings of the theologians who flourished after the end of the apostolic age, and before the origin of the Arian controversy. Their suffrage is claimed with equal confidence by the orthodox and by the heretical parties; and the most inquisitive critics have fairly allowed that if they had the good fortune of possessing the Catholic Verity, they have delivered their conceptions in loose, inaccurate, and sometimes contradictory language." Ideas so naturally irreconcilable,

p. 597), who contends that by *co-essential and consubstantial*, the Nicene Council meant nothing more than that the Son was *generically* God, of the same nature, but *numerically* different, having his own distinct Essence. See also Dr. Burton on a passage similar to one from Tertullian already quoted, where he is misled by not attending to this distinction.—*Theol. Works*, vol. ii. p. 89.

* Cudworth. Intell. Sys. p. 595.

as Jesus when contemplated as the Son of God, and Jesus when contemplated as the Wisdom of God (Logos), with personality attached to it, were certain sooner or later to betray their inconsistency, and to stand out from one another in opposing attitudes. They could be held in combination only so long as two very strong but opposite influences, (a desire to meet the conceptions of the prevalent Philosophy, and a desire at the same time to preserve unviolated the Jewish and Christian doctrine of the Unity of God,) operated together to prevent theologians looking too closely into their Faith, or attempting too strictly to harmonize its elements.

The elements of a necessary separation existed in that confused system by which the earlier Fathers brought together Jesus the Christ, and the Logos of the purer Platonists, into the same conception; some of them inclining to the idea of the Son of God being an eternal emanation from the Father, like light from the sun, veiling the difficulty of a Son being coeternal with his Father under the unmeaning phrase, 'everlasting generation'—and some adopting the lower view that he was only the highest emanation from the origin of all Spirits, the first of created Beings, and the instrument of God in all the other works of Creation. "These speculations," says Gibbon, "became the most serious business of the present, and most useful preparation for a future life. A theology which it was incumbent to believe, which it was impious to doubt, and which it might be dangerous and even fatal to mistake, became the familiar topic of private meditation and popular discourse.* The cold indifference of philosophy was inflamed by the fervent spirit of devotion; and

* "It had been the vice of the Christians of the third century, to involve themselves, 'in certain metaphysical questions which if considered in one light, are too sublime to become the subject of human wit; if in another too trifling to gain the attention of reasonable men.' (Warburton.) The rage for such disputations had been communicated to religion by the contagion of philosophy; but the manner in which it operated on the one and on the other was essentially different. With the philosopher such questions were objects of the understanding only, subjects of *comparatively dispassionate* speculation, whereon the versatile ingenuity of a minute

even the metaphors of common language suggested the fallacious prejudices of sense and experience. The Christians, who abhorred the gross and impure generation of the Greek mythology, were tempted to argue from the familiar analogy of the filial and paternal relations. The character of *Son* seemed to imply a perpetual subordination to the voluntary author of his existence; but as the act of generation in the most spiritual and abstracted sense, must be supposed to transmit the properties of a common nature, they durst not presume to circumscribe the powers or the duration of the Son of an eternal and omnipotent Father.—Their tender reverence for the memory of Christ, and their horror for the profane worship of any created being, would have engaged them to assert the equal and absolute divinity of the *Logos*, if their rapid ascent toward the throne of heaven had not been imperceptibly checked by the apprehension of violating the unity and sole supremacy of the great Father of Christ and of the Universe."

Christ, when viewed as the Wisdom or Logos of God, was by a natural transition of thought placed within the effulgence of the divine glory; but when viewed not as an Attribute but as a Person, the Son and Messiah of the

mind might employ or waste itself. But with the Christian they were matters of truth or falsehood, of belief or disbelief. Hence arose an intense anxiety respecting the result, and thus the passions were awakened, and presently broke loose and proceeded to every excess. From the moment that the solution of these questions was attempted by any other method than the fair interpretation of the words of Scripture; as soon as the copious language of Greece was eagerly applied to the definition of spiritual things, and the explanation of heavenly mysteries, the field of contention seemed to be removed from earth to air—where the foot found nothing stable to rest upon; where arguments were easily eluded, and where the space to fly and to rally was infinite; so that the contest grew more noisy as it was less decisive, and more angry as it became more prolonged and complicated. Add to this the nature and genius of the disputants: for the origin of these disputes may be traced without any exception to the restless imaginations of the East." • • •

"We must also mention the loose and unsettled principles of that age, which had prevailed before the appearance of Christianity, and had been to a certain extent adopted by its professors—*those, for instance, which justified the means by the end, and admitted fraud and forgery into the service of religion.*"—Waddington, *Church Hist. p. 89.*

Father, this dim idea would pass away, and the distinction between God and Christ become too visible to be confused. In this state of opinion two parties naturally appeared, separating the two ideas that entered into the prevalent conception of Christ, each taking up one of them as representing *the whole* truth respecting his nature and person. The Arians, alarmed at the idea of two Gods, inclined to that part of the conception which represented Jesus as the Son and Messenger of the Father, but at the same time elevating him above all other created beings, and giving him an existence before the worlds were. The Athanasians, on the other hand, inclined to that part of the conception which represented him as the Logos of the Deity, and under the reaction, and the necessity for more strictly defining the hidden sense of doctrines, produced by the Arian Creed, attempted to conquer the difficulty of his Sonship by representing him as an eternal emanation from the very substance of the Deity, and exalted him into an equality with God, though at the same time they described it as a derived and subordinate equality. It is unavoidable in describing these views to make use of contradictory words. The ideas are irreconcilable, and were only saved from plainly appearing so by being involved in a cloud of mystical or rather no meaning words; for words must either be significant of ideas, or no-sense. This then was the subject of the great Arian and Trinitarian Controversy, which in the fourth Century shook the peace of the world. It turned upon this point, whether Christ was of the same essence as the Father, and therefore not created but begotten or emanating; or whether he was as the Arians thought, made out of nothing, and therefore a created Being. Neither of them contemplated him as independent of the Supreme Deity, but the Athanasians regarded him as a con-substantial and co-eternal emanation; the Arians, though assigning him the highest rank, regarded him as created like other beings. Such are the great questions of a metaphysical and dogmatical religion. Such are the

mysteries on which Synods and Councils have legislated. Such are the subjects in which Ecclesiastics have shown more interest than in the spirit of the life of Christ, and the moral hopes and preparations of Immortality. Such are the subject matter of Creeds, the dry husks of doctrine, the spiritless formulas on which souls are starved, the bread of Christ converted into a stone, and yet in the eyes of many, superior to practical discipleship, to Charity and the Love of God, to the spirit of Brotherhood and the trustful faith of Duty.

It was to settle this dispute that the first general Council of the Church was assembled at Nice A. D. 325. The Emperor Constantine attended in person. He had previously remonstrated with the contending parties, and entreated them not to disturb the peace of the Empire and of the Church, for matters the most insignificant and small.* But he did not know the temper of Controversialists; nor what things become important in their eyes. † The Athanasians prevailed,

* ὑπὲρ μικρῶν καὶ λίαν ἐλαχίστων.

† "Let us imagine, then, a council called by a Christian Emperor, by a Constantine, a Constantius, a Theodosius, a Justinian, and three, or four, or five hundred prelates, assembled from all quarters, to decide a theological debate."

"Let us consider a little by what various motives these various men may be influenced, as by reverence to the emperor, or to his councillors and favourites, his slaves and eunuchs; by fear of offending some great prelate, as a Bishop of Rome or of Alexandria, who had it in his power to insult, vex, and plague all the bishops within and without his jurisdiction; by the dread of passing for heretics, and of being calumniated, reviled, hated, anathematized, excommunicated, imprisoned, banished, fined, beggared, starved, if they refused to submit; by compliance with some active, leading, and imperious spirits, by a deference to a majority, by a love dictating and domineering, of applause and respect, by vanity and ambition, by a total ignorance of the question in debate, or a total indifference about it, by private friendships, by enmity and resentment, by old prejudices, by hopes of gain, by an indolent disposition, by good nature, by the fatigue of attending, and a desire to be at home, by the love of peace and quiet, and a hatred of contention, &c.

"Whosoever takes these things into due consideration, will not be disposed to pay a blind deference to the authority of general Councils, and will rather be inclined to judge that 'the Council held by the Apostles was the first and the last in which the Holy Spirit may be affirmed to have presided.'

"Thus far we may safely go, and submit to an Apostolical Synod; but if once we proceed one step beyond this, we go we know not whither. If we admit the

and "the con-substantiality of the Father and the Son was established by the Council of Nice." Under this word however lurked future Controversies, and by con-substantiality the Council of Nice meant, not the present doctrine of three persons in one God, but merely sameness of nature or kind, such a sameness as three men may possess who are generically the same but numerically different; and this is openly admitted by the highest authorities, Petavius, Cudworth, Le Clerc, Jortin. "The majority," says Gibbon, "was divided into two parties, distinguished by a contrary tendency to the sentiments of the Tritheists, and of the Sabellians. But as those opposite extremes seemed to overthrow the foundations either of natural or revealed religion, they mutually agreed to qualify the rigour of their principles; and to disavow the just, but invidious, consequences which might be urged by their antagonists. The interest of the common cause inclined them to join their numbers, and to conceal their differences; their animosities were softened by the healing counsels of toleration, and their disputes were suspended by the use of the mysterious *Homoousion* (Consubstantial), which either party was free to interpret according to their peculiar tenets. The Sabellian sense, which about fifty years before had obliged the Council of Antioch to prohibit this celebrated term, had endeared it to those theologians who entertained a secret but partial affection for a nominal Trinity. But the more fashionable saints of the Arian times, the intrepid Athanasius, the learned Gregory

infallibility of one General Council, why not of another? And where shall we stop? At the first Nicene Council, A. D. 325, or at the second Nicene Council, A. D. 787? They who disclaim private judgment, and believe the infallibility of the Church, act consistently in holding the infallibility of Councils; but they who take their faith from the Scriptures, and not from the Church, should be careful not to require nor to yield too much regard to such assemblies, how numerous soever. Numbers, in this case, go for little, and to them the old Proverb may be applied;—

'Est turba *semper* argumentum pessimi.'

"If such Councils make righteous decrees, it must have been by strange good luck."—*Jortin, Eccles. Hist.* vol. ii. p. 183-4.

Nazianzen, and the other pillars of the Church, who supported with ability and success the Nicene doctrine, appeared to consider the expression *of substance* as if it had been synonymous with that *of nature*; and they ventured to illustrate their meaning, by affirming that three men, as they belong to the same common species, are con-substantial or homoousian to each other. This pure and distinct equality was tempered on the one hand by the internal connection, and spiritual penetration, which indissolubly unites the divine persons, and on the other by the pre-eminence of the Father, which was acknowledged as far as it is compatible with the independence of the son. Within these limits the almost invisible and tremulous ball of Orthodoxy was allowed securely to vibrate. On either side beyond this consecrated ground the heretics and the dæmons lurked in ambush to surprise and devour the unhappy wanderer. But as the degrees of theological hatred depend on the Spirit of the war, rather than on the importance of the Controversy, the heretics who degraded, were treated with more severity than those who annihilated the person of the Son."*

We are now arrived at that great period in the faith of the Church, when the dignity of the Son was authoritatively settled by the Nicene Council. Here is a brief account of its proceedings. "The Bishops began by much personal dissension, and presented to the Emperor a variety of written accusations against each other; the Emperor burnt all their libels and exhorted them to peace and unity. They then proceeded to examine the momentous question proposed to them. It was soon discovered that the differences which it was intended to reconcile might in their principle be reduced to one point, and that point might be expressed by one *word*, and thus the question appears to have been speedily simplified (as indeed was necessary that so many persons might

* Milman's Ed. vol. iii. p. 331.

come to one conclusion on so mysterious a subject) and reduced to this—whether the Son was or was not *consubstantial* with the Father. Then arose subtile disceptations respecting the meaning of the word, 'about which some conflicted with each other, dwelling on the term and minutely dissecting it; it was like a battle fought in the dark; for neither party seemed at all to understand on what ground they vilified each other.' However the result was perfectly conclusive; they finally decided against the Arian opinions, and established respecting the two first persons in the Trinity, the doctrine which the Church still professes in the Nicene Creed."*

This doctrine is as follows:—you will perceive that it is partly Trinitarian, *and only partly*, a *derived* deity being attributed to the Son, *and no deity whatsoever* attributed to the Holy Spirit. Changes were afterwards introduced into this Creed to adapt it to the growing orthodoxy of the times. I shall mention these in their proper places; meanwhile I give the Nicene Creed of the Nicene Council:—

The Nicene Creed, A.D. 325.

"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten and only begotten of the Father; that is of the substance of the Father, God of (out of) God, Light of (from) Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made both in heaven and in earth: who for us men, and for our salvation, descended and was incarnate, and was made man, suffered, and rose again the third day, ascended into the heavens, and will come to judge the living and the dead. (We believe) also in the Holy Ghost.

"The holy Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes

* Waddington, Church Hist. p. 93.

those who say that there was a time when the Son of God was not, and that before he was begotten he was not, and that he was made out of nothing, or out of another substance or essence, and is created, changeable, or alterable."

"Such," says Jortin, "was the Nicene Creed, as it stood originally and before it was interpolated by subsequent Councils. Our church hath dropped the anathematizing clauses at the end, and one cannot help wishing that the Nicene Fathers had done the same. The Christians in times following were perpetually making anathematisms, even upon the slightest and poorest occasions; and it is really a wonder that they did not at last insert in their Litanies, 'We beseech Thee to curse and confound the Pelagians, Semi-pelagians, Nestorians, Eutychians, Monothelites, Jacobites, Iconoclasts, and all heretics and schismatics.'"*

The history of the fourth century is almost entirely taken up with the persecutions of Consubstantialists against Arians, Arians against Consubstantialists, and the minor strifes of the subdivisions of these sects. After the death of Constantine, the Emperor Constantius sided with the Arians, and then the persecuted became the persecutors, for wherever a dogmatical Religion is held, wherever Creeds are the Essentials of Salvation, of course no Charity can be learned in the School of Suffering. There is an admirable passage contained in Archdeacon Jortin's most instructive remarks on Ecclesiastical History. It extorts a smile to observe with what unconsciousness dogmatic Theologians of all ages insult their fellow-disciples, in the name and for the love of God, and close their acts of persecution with the words of affection and blessing:—

"In the fourth century were held thirteen Councils against Arius, fifteen for him, and seventeen for the Semiarians; in all forty-five.†

* Eccles. Hist. vol. ii. p. 210.

† "The Christian Religion, which in itself is plain and simple, he (Constantius)

"How could the Arians, in the time of Constantius and Valens, bring themselves to such an un-christian persecuting temper? How could they oppress their fellow-Christians, the Consubstantialists, who, supposing them to have been in error, fell into it through a religious fear of ascribing too little to their Redeemer, and of not paying him sufficient honour? Can a man love his saviour, and hate his brother for a mistake of this kind?

"And how could the Consubstantialists persuade themselves that an Arian, who perhaps had suffered for professing Christianity in times of distress, who believed Christ to be his Maker, his Saviour, his King, and his Judge, would *choose* to detract from his dignity, and to offend him in whom he placed all his hopes of salvation? Human nature is not capable of this folly; and if the man were in an error, yet in such a person the error must have been involuntary, a mere defect of the understanding, and not a fault of the will.

"A Christian and a lover of peace, who lived in obscurity, and whose name I cannot tell, stood up and said:—'My brethren, the things to be believed are few, the things to be done are many: but you behave yourselves as if the reverse of this were true. St. Paul tells you, "The grace of God that bringeth Salvation hath appeared to all men; teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearance of the great God, and (of) our Saviour, Jesus Christ." Concerning the nature of *Jesus* you can dispute incessantly, and concerning the word *Grace*, you will probably dispute no less; but the rest of

confounded by the dotage of superstition. Instead of reconciling the parties by the weight of his authority, he cherished and propagated, by verbal disputes, the differences which his vain curiosity had excited. The highways were covered with troops of bishops, galloping from every side to the Assemblies, which they call synods; and while they laboured to reduce the whole sect to their own particular opinions, the public establishment of the posts was almost ruined by their *hasty* and repeated journeys."—*Ammianus, as quoted by Gibbon*, vol. iii. p. 347.

the sentence you disregard as of small consequence or importance. What, I beseech you, must the Jews and the Pagans conceive of you and of your religion? And what do the holy angels think, who look down upon your contentions? Those blessed and compassionate spirits pity you, and think you mere children. But when from contending you proceed to beating your fellow-servants, to persecuting and destroying, they consider you as most malicious and wicked children; their pity is changed into indignation, and they would strike you dead, if the Supreme Governor did not stay their hand, and remind them that such disorders must needs arise, and shall one day be rectified.'

"So said this *Unknown*; but behold the consequence! The Consubstantialists called him an Arian, and the Arians called him a Consubstantialist.

"The Nicene Fathers having anathematized the Arians, the Emperor seconded them, and banished Arius and the bishops who sided with him, and ordered the books of Arius to be burnt; and added, 'If any man be found to have concealed a copy of those books, and not to have instantly produced it and thrown it into the fire, he shall be put to death. The Lord be with you all!'"*—(*Eccles. Hist.* vol. ii. p. 205.)

I shall now summon two authorities, the one Cudworth, the other Jortin, to prove that the Nicene Fathers had no knowledge of the present doctrine of the Trinity, and that they believed Christ to be the same with God, not numerically, but as partaking of the same nature, belonging to the same class of beings:—"Wherefore it seemeth to be unquestionably evident, that when the ancient orthodox Fathers of the Christian Church maintained against Arius, the Son

* "Constantine's conduct was variable afterwards, *for he certainly understood not* this perplexed and obscure controversy, and he acted as he was influenced at different times by the ecclesiastics of each party, who accused one another, not only of heterodoxy, but of being enemies to the Emperor, and of other faults and misdemeanors."—*Jortin.*

to be Co-essential or Consubstantial with the Father, though the word be thus interpreted, *of the same essence or substance*, yet they universally understood thereby, not a *sameness of singular and numerical*, but of common or universal essence only; that is the generical or specifical Essence of the Godhead; that the Son was no *Creature*, but truly and properly God." * * *

"We have now given a full account of the true and genuine *Platonic* Trinity; from which it may clearly appear, how far it either agreeth or disagreeth with the *Christian*. First, therefore, though some of the later Platonists have partly misunderstood, and partly adulterated that ancient *Cabala* of the Trinity, as was before declared, confounding therein the *differences* between God and the Creature, and thereby laying a foundation for infinite Polytheism; yet did *Plato himself* and some of his genuine followers, (*though living before Christianity*,) approach so near to the doctrine thereof, as in some manner to correspond therewith." ..... "From whence it may be concluded, that as *Arianism* is commonly supposed to approach nearer to the truth of Christianity than Photinianism, so is *Platonism* undoubtedly more agreeable thereunto than Arianism, it being a certain middle thing, betwixt that and Sabellianism, *which in general* was that mark that the Nicene Council also aimed at."

This is more fully explained in the next extract:—

"Athanasius in sundry places still further supposes those *three divine hypostases* to make up one entire divinity, after the same manner as the *Fountain* and the *Stream* make up one entire *river*; or the *root*, and the *stock*, and the *branches*, one entire tree. And in this sense also is the whole Trinity said by him to be one Divinity, and one Nature, and one Essence, and one God. And accordingly, the word Homoousios (Consubstantial) seems here to be taken by Athanasius in a further sense besides that before mentioned; not only *for things* agreeing in one common and general essence, as

Three individual men are co-essential with one another; but also for such as concurrently together, make up one entire thing, and are therefore jointly essential thereunto.—In all which doctrine of his there is nothing but what a true and genuine Platonist would readily subscribe to. From whence it may be concluded, that the right Platonic Trinity differs not so much from the doctrine of the Ancient Church, as some late writers have supposed."—(*Intellec. Sys.* p. 591, 608, 619-20.)*

"But here it will be asked, perhaps, what was the doctrine of the Nicene Fathers, and what did they mean by Consubstantiality. It is impossible to answer this question without using logical and metaphysical terms.

"By the word *Consubstantial*, they meant not of the same numerical, or individual substance, but of the same generical substance or subsistence. As, amongst men, a son is *consubstantial* with his father; so, in their opinion, the Son of God is consubstantial with the Father, that is, of the same divine nature.

"By this word therefore they intended to express *the same kind of nature*, and so far, *a natural equality*. But according to them, this natural equality excluded not a relative inequality; a *majority* and *minority*, founded upon the everlasting difference between *giving* and *receiving*, *causing*, and being *caused*.

"They had no notion of distinguishing between *person* and *being*, between an *intelligent agent*, and an intelligent active substance, subsistence, or entity.

"When they said that the Father was *God*, they meant that he was God of *himself*, *originally*, *and underived*.

* "Notwithstanding all which it must be granted, that though this co-essentiality of the three persons in the Trinity does imply them to be all God, yet does it not follow from thence of necessity that they are therefore *One God*."—*Cudworth*, p. 596.

"When they said that the Son was *God*, they meant that he was God by *generation* or *derivation*.

"The Unity of God they maintained, and they defended it, first, by considering the Father as the First Cause, the only underived and self-existing; secondly, by supposing an intimate, inseparable, and incomprehensible union, connection, indwelling, and co-existence, by which the Father was in the Son, and the Son in the Father; and thirdly, by saying that in the Father and the Son there was an unity of will, design, and consent, and one divine power and dominion, originally in the Father, and derivatively in the Son.

"In process of time, Christians went into a notion that the Son was 'of the same individual substance with the Father, and with the Holy Spirit,' and they seem to have done this with a view to secure the doctrine of the *Unity*.

"The schoolmen took up the subject, and treated it in their way, which they call *explaining*, and which men of sense call *impenetrable jargon*."—(*Jortin, Eccles. Hist.* vol. ii. p. 202.)

You will observe, that so far no mention had been made of the separate deity of the Holy Spirit. The original Nicene Creed is silent upon the subject. It was a question that grew out of the deity of Christ. The philosophy of the times, no less than the reluctance to be deemed the followers of a crucified man, led to the deification of Jesus, and afterwards, from the personifications of the Holy Spirit, in such expressions as "I will send unto you the Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth," and from its frequent connection with the name and mission of Christ, arose the idea of a separate divinity, a third person in the Trinity. The Platonic Trinity would indeed have naturally led the early Fathers to the conception of a third principle, and in some of the Anti-Nicene Writers this conception appears; but the Controversy was carried on with almost exclusive reference to the deity of Christ, which

independent of the general burden of their writings, clearly appears from the fact, that when defending themselves against the charge of violating the Unity of God, they always state the objection, so as to show that the accusation against them was that they were "introducing a *second* God."

Accordingly it was after the Council at Nice, when the deity of the Son was established, that orthodoxy took a second and consequent step, and proceeded to establish the deity of the third person in the Trinity.*

This was effected towards the close of the fourth century, A.D. 381, by the Second General Council, that of Constantinople, when the following addition was made to the previously deficient orthodoxy of the Nicene Creed. The Nicene Creed had simply stated, "We believe in the Holy Ghost." The Council of Constantinople rectified the error thus: "We believe in the Holy Ghost, *the Lord and Giver* of life; who proceedeth from the Father; who with the Father and Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spake by the prophets." Still, however, the adjustments were not correct, nor the formula of perfect orthodoxy. It occurred to the Church, centuries after, that the Holy Spirit was described in the Scriptures as being dependent not upon the Father alone, but as being "sent" by the Son; and that therefore the Third Person must hold that relation to the Second which the Second did to the Third, and must therefore be derived not from the Father alone, but from the Fa-

* "That little is said concerning the separate divinity of the Spirit of God in the Scripture is evident to every body; but the reason that Epiphanius gives for it, will not be easily imagined. In order to account for the Apostles saying so little concerning the divinity of the Holy Spirit, and omitting the mention of him after that of the Father and the Son, (as when Paul says, 'there is one God and Father of all, of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things,') he says that 'the Apostles writing by the inspiration of the Spirit, He did not choose to introduce much commendation of Himself, lest it should give us an example of commending ourselves.'"—*Priestley's History of the Corruptions of Christianity*, p. 60.

ther and Son together.* Accordingly this new idea, essential to Salvation, was included in the formula so long in this respect defective, with what fatal consequences we are not told; and at last, in the ninth century, a perfectly accurate and saving description of the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son was embodied in the Nicene Creed, some five hundred years after its first construction. So slowly did the "unimproved and unimprovable revelation" of dogmatic divines advance to its perfection. Yet we are gravely told of the faith of the Church,—a faith human all over; and of the traditions of Christian antiquity,—traditions whose origin we can trace at a great distance from apostolic times, and whose constant increase, in proportion as we recede from those times, would seem to imply that the further Councils of the Church were removed from the Apostles the more they knew about them—the accuracy of inspired Tradition differing, as of course it should, from common Memory and common History, by being in an inverse ratio to the distance. This is no subject for ridicule; but only the sacred feelings and high themes that are necessarily associated with such extravagance, have so long saved it from the most merciless exposure. Those solemn themes, the awe and loveliness of which Ecclesiastical History has

* "The Holy Spirit, if he be God, as the objection is stated by Basil, must either be begotten or unbegotten. If he be unbegotten, he is the Father; if begotten, the Son; and if he is neither begotten nor unbegotten, he is a creature."—*Priestley's Hist. Early Opinions*, vol. ii. 331.

This is the least offensive specimen I could find of the common objections made to the separate deity of the Holy Ghost at the time the doctrine was first proposed. The plainer and coarser forms of the objection, unhesitatingly handled by the Fathers, I withhold from reverence. But let the reader consult the Ecclesiastical History of the Period. The difficulty stated by Athanasius, Basil, and others, was overcome by establishing a certain mysterious or rather no-meaning difference between *begotten* and *proceeding*. Such is always the easy refuge of mystics. The line is a faint one between unintelligible ideas and no ideas at all. "The *natirity* of the Son," says Austin, "differs from the *procession* of the Spirit, otherwise they would be brothers." I doubt whether it is right to disclose to all eyes the morbid anatomy of Theology; but I assure my readers that I am reverentially forbearing.

done its best to lower and degrade, have yet repaid the disservice by dropping something of their own solemnity on its unworthy pages, and by taking every thing that is associated with God and Christ within the protection of the sentiment of reverence, have shielded Ecclesiastical History from that unsparing criticism which perhaps would have been more serviceable to Truth, and productive of a reverence higher and more profitable towards both Christ and God.

In the history of the doctrine of the Trinity, the settlement of one Controversy always gave birth to another, in the progressive attempt to make mysteries intelligible. The deity of Christ naturally gave rise to some curiosity respecting the humanity of Christ. Hitherto all parties, Arians, Athanasians, and Unitarians, according to their respective views, had for the most part agreed that the Christ consisted of one body and one spirit; and their controversies related simply to the rank and nature of that spirit. The Arians believed the soul of Jesus to be the first of created intelligences, the highest Emanation from God. The Platonic Christians thought that the Logos used instrumentally the body of Jesus, and supplied the place of a human soul. When the Council of Nice, however, established that the spirit of Jesus was *consubstantial* with that of God, the idea naturally presented itself that, since Jesus expired upon the cross, this was to represent the divine nature as capable of suffering and death. Now those who were the most orthodox, whose views and language receded to the extremest distance from those of the heretical Arians, would necessarily fall into modes of conception and expression which implied this revolting extravagance. Accordingly Apollinaris, one of the most zealous Athanasians, and the bitter enemy of Arius, freely, and unconscious of heresy, followed out his principles with perverse consistency, and openly spoke of the Logos of God supplying the place of a human soul in the body of Christ; and, of course, undergoing all that a spirit,

so situated, could suffer.* But so narrow is the way of orthodoxy, that the zealous Father was made quickly to discover that by starting aside from one heresy, only a little too sharply, he had immediately fallen into another; for the pitfalls of damnable error lie upon each side of the hair-breadth way of Salvation. By pursuing too exclusively the deity of Christ, Apollinaris overlooked his humanity, and taught the heresy of "one incarnate nature," and the consequent sufferings and death of God. This impious extreme, being condemned by the Asiatic Church, though popular in Egypt, orthodoxy naturally took a rebound; and Apollinaris, having confused the two natures into one, Nestorius separated them into two, to such an extent, as virtually to destroy the mystical union. Here was another and an opposite heresy equally

* "In the age of religious freedom, which was determined by the Council of Nice, the dignity of Christ was measured by private judgment, according to the indefinite rule of Scripture, or reason, or tradition. But when his pure and proper divinity had been established on the ruins of Arianism, the faith of the Catholics trembled on the edge of a precipice, where it was impossible to recede, dangerous to stand, dreadful to fall; and the manifold inconveniences of this creed were aggravated by the sublime character of their theology. They hesitated to pronounce; *that* God himself, the second person of an equal and consubstantial Trinity, was manifested in the flesh; *that* a being who pervades the universe, had been confined in the womb of Mary; *that* his eternal duration had been marked by the days, and months, and years of human existence; *that* the Almighty had been scourged and crucified; *that* his impassible essence had felt pain and anguish; *that* his omniscience was not exempt from ignorance; and *that* the source of life and immortality expired on Mount Calvary. These alarming consequences were affirmed with unblushing simplicity by Apollinaris, bishop of Laodicea, and one of the luminaries of the church. The son of a learned grammarian, he was skilled in all the sciences of Greece; eloquence, erudition, and philosophy, conspicuous in the volumes of Apollinaris, were humbly devoted to the service of religion. The worthy friend of Athanasius, the worthy antagonist of Julian, he bravely wrestled with the Arians and Polytheists, and though he affected the rigour of geometrical demonstration, his Commentaries revealed the literal and allegorical sense of the Scriptures. A mystery which had long floated in the looseness of popular belief, was defined by his perverse diligence in a technical form; and he first proclaimed the memorable words, "One incarnate nature of Christ," which are still re-echoed with hostile clamours in the churches of Asia, Egypt, and Æthiopia. He taught that the Godhead was united or mingled with the body of a man; and that the *Logos*, the eternal wisdom, supplied in the flesh the place and *office of a human soul*."—*Gibbon*, vol. viii. p. 279.

fatal to the orthodoxy of the Church and the salvation of mankind; for if such was the loose connection of the two natures, then, God being incapable of suffering, only the human nature of Jesus underwent crucifixion and death. But, on the other hand, if this was so, then the sufferings of Christ were only those of a *man*; and all the mystery of the Incarnation was dissipated, and became ineffectual for any theological purpose.

A new controversy consequently arose, respecting the right adjustments of these saving connections between the humanity and the deity of the Christ. "Before this time," says Mosheim, "it had been settled by the decrees of former Councils, that Christ was truly God and truly man; but there had as yet been no controversy, and no decision of any council, concerning the mode and effect of the union of the two natures in Christ. In consequence, there was a want of agreement among the Christian Teachers in their language concerning this mystery." This controversy, which, for some time had been carried on without attracting towards it definitively the public authorities of the Church, drew at last the eager notice of all Christendom; when Nestorius, the Prelate of Constantinople, carried the distinction between the two natures to so definite a point as to deny that the Virgin Mary could, with any propriety, be denominated the "Mother of God;" and that her titles should be limited to that of "Mother of Christ" or "Mother of Man." This was regarded, by the orthodox, as reducing the death of Christ to that of a mere man, and the mystery of the Incarnation to little better than a trick of words. It was no easy matter in those times to avoid, on the one hand, confounding the two natures; and, on the other, separating them so distinctly as to destroy the whole theological value of the mystical combination: nor have modern Theologians been more successful in adjusting this puzzle than their perplexed and perplexing predecessors.

The chief alarmist upon this occasion of the heresy of Nestorius was Cyril, the Patriarch of Alexandria, an arrogant and aspiring man, who gladly seized upon a tempting opportunity to humble his rival, the bishop of Constantinople. "Some jealousy which at that time subsisted respecting the relative dignity of the two sees, probably heightened the contention, and is believed by some to have caused it. Whether that be or not, the two Patriarchs anathematized each other with mutual violence; and such troubles were raised that the Emperor (Theodosius the younger) deemed it necessary to convoke a General Council for the purpose of appeasing them. It was assembled at Ephesus A.D. 431, and stands in the annals of the Church as the THIRD GENERAL COUNCIL. Cyril was appointed to preside, and consequently to judge the cause of his adversary: and he carried into this office such little show of impartiality, that he refused even to wait for the arrival of the bishop of Antioch and others, who were held friendly to Nestorius, and proceeded to pronounce sentence, while the meeting was yet incomplete. To secure or prosecute his advantages, he had brought with him from Egypt a number of robust and daring fanatics, who acted as his soldiery; and it had been skilfully arranged that Ephesus should be chosen for the decision of a difference respecting the dignity of the Virgin; since popular tradition had buried her in that city, and the imperfect Christianity of its inhabitants had readily transferred to her the worship which their ancestors had offered to Diana." *

Such are the assemblies from which our Creeds date their birth; by whose authority the Rule of Faith was determined; and whose character is described in the words of the Emperor Theodosius when dismissing this very Council of Ephesus—"God is my witness, that I am not the author of

* Waddington, Hist. of the Church, p. 182.

rovidence will discern and punish the
ur provinces; and may your private
chief and scandal of your meeting."
decreed, by bishops who could not
* that the Union of the human and di-
vas so intimate that Mary might pro-
other of God. The influence of Cyril
imidating the bishops and bribing the
"Thanks to the purse of St. Cyril,"
Romish Church which regards Councils
t the present day, Nestorian." "The
ls are equally indebted to St. Cyril for

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y of Church Controversies, pushed their
n excess, as to fall into the opposite error,
formerly condemned heresy of Apollinaris,
n of but one nature. Eutyches the friend of
e bitter enemy of Nestorius, openly preached
t there was but one nature, that of the incar-
The Church was again in a blaze, and again
r summoned a Council at Ephesus, A.D. 449,
presided Dioscorus, the successor of St. Cyril as
f Alexandria. Here the sentence of the last Coun-
eversed, and Orthodoxy was pronounced to be the
of one divine nature in Christ, and only one. This
, however, owing principally to the opposition made
y the Bishop of Rome, was never authoritatively recog-
by the Church, and such was its character for tumult
brutality that it is marked in Ecclesiastical History by
expressive name of the Assembly of Banditti.

Speedily then was this heresy, inconveniently sanctioned by a Council of the Church, of only one nature in Christ, which

* Jortin, vol. iii. p. 116. † Norton on the Trinity.

in effect represented God as subject to suffering and death, replaced by the orthodoxy of two natures in one person, which was attended, however, with the opposite difficulty of so separating the God from the Man as to nullify the mystical efficacy of his sufferings.* But who will devise a form of words in which irreconcilable ideas shall be reconciled, and no weak point be exposed in the skilful statement of a fiction? THE FOURTH GENERAL COUNCIL of the Church was held at Chalcedon, A.D. 451. There are two things most remarkable respecting this Council; first—that it declared Jesus to be of the same essence with God as to his divine nature, only in the sense in which he was of the same essence with other men as to his human nature, thus denying his *numerical* oneness with God, and merely referring him to the same class of Beings, making him generically one, as two men are;† and secondly—that though the majority of the Bishops favoured the doctrine of one nature, they were obliged by the obstinacy of the Emperor Marcian, in conjunction with the Bishop of Rome, to reverse at one of their sittings their decision at a

* "Hence many questions arose, which gave rise to as many controversies. For example, it was debated, Whether the two natures in Christ were so united as to become one; or whether they remained distinct? Whether, since Christ was born, and died, and rose again, it could be said that *God* was born and died, and rose again?

"Whether the Virgin Mary, who was the Mother of Christ, could be called the Mother of *God*?

"Whether Christ were two persons, or only one?

"Whether Christ was everywhere present, in his human, as in his divine nature?

"Whether one person of the Trinity could be said to suffer for us?

"Whether the whole Trinity could be said to suffer for us?

"Whether in Christ there were three substances, or only two?

"These questions produced altercation and strife, and then anathematisms, and then fightings and murders."—*Jortin*, vol. iii. p. 117.

To these might be added the question proposed by the Emperor Heraclius, A.D. 629, to his Bishops—"Whether Christ, of one person but two natures, was actuated by a single or a double will?" This gave rise to what was called the *Monothelite* (one will) Controversy, as that respecting the single nature was called the Monophysite (one nature) Controversy.

† *Jortin*, vol. iii. p. 124.

former, and finally to decree that orthodoxy consisted in believing "Jesus Christ to be one person in two distinct natures, without any confusion or mixture." "It was in vain," says Gibbon, "that a multitude of episcopal voices (the advocates for only one nature) repeated in chorus 'The definition of the Fathers is orthodox and immutable! The heretics are now discovered! Anathema to the Nestorians! Let them depart from the synod! Let them repair to Rome!' The Legates threatened, the Emperor was absolute, and a committee of eighteen bishops prepared a new decree, which was imposed on the reluctant assembly. In the name of the fourth general Council, the Christ in one person, but *in* two natures, was announced to the Catholic world: an invisible line was drawn between the heresy of Apollinaris and the faith of St. Cyril; and the road to paradise, a bridge as sharp as a razor, was suspended over the abyss by the master hand of the theological artist. During ten centuries of blindness and servitude, Europe received her religious opinions from the Oracle of the Vatican; and the same doctrine, already varnished with the rust of antiquity, was admitted without dispute into the creed of the Reformers, who disclaimed the supremacy of the Roman pontiff. The synod of Chalcedon still triumphs in the Protestant churches; but the ferment of controversy has subsided, and the most pious Christians of the present day are ignorant, or careless, of their own belief concerning the mystery of the incarnation."*

Still the great difficulty pressed upon this decision, that the God was so separable from the man as to destroy the mystical value of the incarnation with respect to the sufferings of Jesus. A resource was found, (for when are Theologians without resources?) in what has been called the doctrine of the Communication of Properties, which meant that though God was incapable of sufferings or death, yet that through the

* Milman's Edit. vol. viii. p. 312.

mystical union of the human and divine, there might be a transmission of qualities from the one to the other, so as to attach an infinite efficacy to the sufferings and death of the human part of the compound Christ. "The doctrine of the Communication of Properties," says Le Clerc, "is as intelligible as if one were to say, that there is a circle which is so united with a triangle, that the circle has the properties of the triangle, and the triangle those of the circle." "What sense those who have asserted the sufferings of God have fancied that the words might have, is a question which, after all that has been written upon the subject, is left very much to conjecture. I imagine that it is at the present day, the gross conception of some who think themselves orthodox on this point, that the divine and human natures being united in Christ as the Mediator, a compound nature different from either, capable of suffering, was thus formed."*

I have now detailed the progress of the doctrine of the Trinity, as it gained accessions from the various controversies that arose out of the Nicene Creed. We come now to the THIRD CREED of the English Church, that of Athanasius. Orthodoxy in this creed approaches to its perfection of precise, if not intelligible, statements; though, strange to say, we shall find that even here something of completeness is wanting, and that the later schemes of the Trinity have corrected the Athanasian formula, as dwelling too much upon the derived nature of the Son, and not asserting with sufficient force his independent identity.

No general Council of the Church established the Athanasian creed; nor does any one know who wrote it, nor when it was first introduced. From one of its clauses, the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and Son, which secret was not made known to the Church until the eighth century, it becomes evident that this theological paradox proceeded from

* Norton on the Trinity, p. 78.

the ingenuity of some monk of the dark ages. The whole force of this Creed depends upon two distinctions, which I presume no one can perceive, between "created" and "begotten," and between "begotten" and "proceeding." The Son is not *created* but *begotten*—and the Holy Ghost is not *begotten* but *proceeding*. And this is *saving* truth! food for the Soul! the heavenly light sent from God to refresh man's inner spirit, and to fill him with the aspirations after perfection, which in this world of temptation are to keep him true to his immortal destinies, to connect him with his Example and Fore-runner, once tried upon the Earth, now peaceful amid the skies! To one asking, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" the answer of Jesus addressed itself to the spiritual life of the disciple, but the answer of the Church of England addresses itself to a perception of certain metaphysical distinctions, and is contained in that creed which "unless a man keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly."

The Athanasian Creed. (*A. D.* 500—800.)

Whosoever will be saved: before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholick Faith.

Which Faith, except every one do keep whole and undefiled: without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.

And the Catholick Faith is this: that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity;

Neither confounding the Persons: nor dividing the Substance.

For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son: and another of the Holy Ghost.

But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one: the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son: and such is the Holy Ghost.

The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate: and the Holy Ghost uncreate.

The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible: and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible.

The Father eternal, the Son eternal: and the Holy Ghost eternal.

And yet they are not three eternals: but one eternal.

As also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated: but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible.

So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty: and the Holy Ghost Almighty.

And yet they are not three Almighties: but one Almighty.

So the Father is God, the Son is God: and the Holy Ghost is God.

And yet they are not three Gods: but one God.

So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord: and the Holy Ghost Lord.

And yet not three Lords: but one Lord.

For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity: to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord;

So are we forbidden by the Catholick Religion: to say, There be three Gods, or three Lords.

The Father is made of none: neither created, nor begotten.

The Son is of the Father alone: not made, nor created, but begotten.

The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son: neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.

So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons: one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts.

And in this Trinity none is afore, or after other: none is greater, or less than another;

But the whole three Persons are co-eternal together: and co-equal.

So that in all things, as is aforesaid: the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity, is to be worshipped.

He therefore that will be saved: must thus think of the Trinity.

Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation: that he also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For the right Faith is, that we believe and confess: that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man;

God, of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds: and Man, of the Substance of his Mother, born in the world;

Perfect God, and perfect Man: of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting;

Equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead: and inferior to the Father, as touching his Manhood.

Who although he be God and Man: yet he is not two, but one Christ;

One; not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh: but by taking of the Manhood into God;

One altogether; not by confusion of Substance: but by unity of Person.

For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man: so God and Man is one Christ;

Who suffered for our salvation: descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead.

He ascended into heaven, he sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty: from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies: and shall give account for their own works.

And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting: and they that have done evil into everlasting fire.

This is the Catholick Faith: which, except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved.

I shall now give you the history and character of this Athanasian Creed in the words of Waddington, one of the ablest Ecclesiastical Historians, I might say the ablest, for Jortin did not pretend to write a History, that the Church of England has produced. You will recollect that one of the Lectures, to be delivered at Christ Church, announces "the Athanasian Creed to be explained and defended." Without wishing to anticipate that Lecture, hear now, and recollect then, the opposing voices of the Church.

"Before we take leave of this period, (from A. D. 600, to A. D. 800,) it is proper to mention, that the first appearance of the Creed, commonly called Athanasian, is ascribed to it with great probability. There can be no doubt that this exposition of faith was composed in the West, and in Latin; but the exact date of its composition has been the subject of much difference. The very definite terms, in which it expresses the Church doctrine of the Incarnation, are sufficient to prove it posterior to the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, or later than the middle of the fifth century.* Again, if we are to consider the doctrine of the *double* procession of the Holy Spirit, as being expressly declared in it, since that mystery was scarcely made matter of public controversy until the eighth century, it might seem difficult to refer a creed, positively asserting the more recent doctrine, to an earlier age. But the historical monuments of the Church do not quite support this supposition; the Creed, such probably as it now exists, is mentioned by the Council of Autun, in the year 670, and its faithful repetition by the Clergy enjoined; and we find the same injunction repeated in the beginning of the ninth age. Thus it gradually gained ground; nevertheless there seems to be great reason for the opinion, that it was

* "Vigilius Tapsensis hath been supposed, by many, to have been the Maker of the Athanasian Creed about this time (the close of the fifth century). Others are of a different opinion. But it matters little by whom, or where, or when it was composed."—*Jortin, Eccles. Hist.* vol. iii. p. 131.

not universally received even in the western church until nearly two centuries afterwards.

"Considered as an exposition of doctrine, the Athanasian Creed contains a faithful summary of the high mysteries of Christianity as interpreted by the Church of Rome. Considered as a rule of necessary faith enforced by the penalty of Eternal Condemnation, the same Creed again expresses one of the most rigid principles of the same Church. The Unity of the Church comprehended Unity of belief: there could be no salvation out of it; nor any hope for those who deviated even from the most mysterious among its tenets. And thus, by constant familiarity with the declarations of an exclusive faith, the heart of many a Romish priest may have been closed against the sufferings of the heretic, rescued (as he might think) by the merciful chastisement of the Church from the flames which are never quenched!

"It would be irrelevant in this work, and wholly unprofitable, to inquire how far any temporary circumstances may have justified the introduction of the Athanasian Creed into the Liturgy of our own Church—constructed as that Church is on the very opposite principle of Universal Charity. But we cannot forbear to offer one remark naturally suggested by the character and history of this Creed, that if at any future time, it should be judged expedient to expunge it, there is no reason, there is scarcely any prejudice which could be offended by such erasure.* The sublime truths which it contains are not expressed in the language of Holy Scripture; nor could they possibly have been so expressed, since the inspired writers were not studious minutely to expound inscrutable mysteries, neither can it plead any sanction from high antiquity, or even traditional authority; since it was

* "The opinions of some of our own Churchmen on this subject are collected by Clarke in his book on the Trinity. The expression of Bishop Tomline cannot be too generally known. 'We know,' he says, 'that different persons have deduced different, and even opposite doctrines from the words of Scripture, and con-

composed many centuries after the times of the Apostles, in a very corrupt age of a corrupt Church, and composed in so much obscurity, that the very pen from which it proceeded is not certainly known to us. The inventions of men, when they have been associated for ages with the exercises of religion, should indeed be touched with respect and discretion; but it is a dangerous error to treat them as inviolable; and it is something worse than error to confound them in holiness and reverence with the words and things of God."*

In reading these words the wish involuntarily arises that the temper, as well as the sound learning and philosophical spirit, of the able writer was shared by all his brethren. Yet it does sound strange to hear a dignitary of the Church of England describe a Creed of his own Church, as having its only use, during the days of Romish intolerance, in shutting up, through familiarity with its persecuting spirit, the avenues of relenting mercy in the hard hearts of priests; and now in the milder Church of England, constructed, we are told, though we had not discovered it, on the "principle of Universal Charity," of absolutely no use whatever, so that there hardly exists even a prejudice which its erasure would offend. Yet this is the very Creed which, in the course of this controversy is to be explained and defended. If the Church of England is, indeed, founded in the principle of Universal Charity, some of its Ministers are very heretical interpreters of its spirit, and yet we must do them the justice

sequently there must be many errors among Christians; but since the Gospel no where informs us what degree of error will exclude from eternal happiness, I am ready to acknowledge that in my judgment, notwithstanding the authority of former times, our church would have acted more wisely and more consistently with its general principles of mildness and toleration, if it had not adopted the damnatory clauses of the Athanasian Creed. Though I firmly believe that the doctrines themselves of this creed are all founded in Scripture, I cannot but conceive it both unnecessary and presumptuous to say, that except every one do keep them whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.'"—*Exposition*, part iii. art. viii.

* *Church History*, p. 220.

of confessing that the Creeds and Articles of the Church are equally unfortunate expounders of the spirit of Universal Charity. Men of Christian and gentle temper interpret Articles of Faith through their own gentle spirit; but fanatics read hard formulas with different eyes. We can only wish that the religion of this excellent historian was the religion of his Church, and that his Creed was as Christian as his heart.

I have now only to mention the more modern and final form of the doctrine of the Trinity. It arose out of the still unsettled meaning of the long used word *Consubstantial*, which, as I have before stated, was used by many of the later Fathers, and those considered pre-eminently orthodox, as Cyril, to signify not a numerical sameness, but merely a sameness of species or nature, and so the Trinity virtually taught the doctrine of three Gods. And this conception was prevalent not only after the Council of Nice, A. D. 325, but after the later Councils of Constantinople, A. D. 381, and of Ephesus, A. D. 431. I give the history of the last transformation of the Trinity in the words, and with the authority of Cudworth :—

"It is certain that not a few of those Ancient Fathers, who were therefore reputed orthodox, because they zealously opposed Arianism, did entertain this opinion, that the three hypostases or Persons of the Trinity had not only one *General and Universal Essence of the Godhead*, belonging to them all, they being all God; but were also *Three Individuals*, under one and the same ultimate species, or specific essence and substance of the Godhead; just as three individual men, (Thomas, Peter, and John,) under that ultimate species of *Man*, or that specific essence of *Humanity*, which have only a numerical difference from one another." . . . . .
"And because it seems plainly to follow from hence, that therefore they must needs be as much *three Gods* as there

are Three Men, these learned Fathers endeavoured with their logic to prove, that *Three Men* are but abusively and improperly so called *Three*; they being really and truly but One, because there is but *one and the same Specific Essence or Substance of human nature* in them all; and seriously persuaded men to lay aside all that kind of language. By which same logic of theirs, they might as well prove also, that all the men in the world are but *One Man*, and that all Epicurus's Gods were but one God neither. But not to urge here that, according to this hypothesis, there cannot possibly be any reason given why there should be as many as *Three* such individuals in the *species of God* which differ only numerically from one another, they being but the very same thing thrice repeated; and yet that there should be no more than Three such neither, and not Three Hundred, or Three Thousand, or as many as there are individuals in the species of Man; we say not to urge this, it seems plain that this *Trinity*, is no other than a kind of *Tritheism*, and that of *Gods independent* and *co-ordinate* too. And, therefore, some would think that the ancient and genuine Platonic Trinity, taken with all its faults, is to be preferred before this Trinity of St. Cyril, and St. Gregory Nyssen, and several other reputed orthodox Fathers; and more agreeable to the principles both of *Christianity* and of *Reason*. However, it is evident from hence, that these reputed orthodox Fathers, who were not a few, were far from thinking the three hypostases of the Trinity to have *the same singular existent essence*; they supposing them to have no otherwise, one and the same essence of the Godhead in them, nor to be one God, than three individual Men, have one common *specifical essence of Manhood* in them, and are all One Man. But as this *Trinity* came afterwards to be decried for *Tritheistic*, so, in the room thereof, started up that other Trinity of Persons *numerically the same*, or having all one and the same singular existent

essence; *a doctrine which seemeth not to have been owned by any public authority in the Christian Church, save that of the Lateran Council only.*" *

Such is the close of the Ecclesiastical History of the doctrine of the Trinity. The fourth general Lateran Council, A. D. 1215, which established the doctrine of Transubstantiation, the growth of the dark ages, passed also out of the hands of theological artists, in its perfected and orthodox form, this singular evidence of the fixed and primitive faith of those who taunt Unitarianism with its want of fixedness, and describe their own creeds as the "unimproved and unimprovable revelation." It is this workmanship of Councils which is so confidently referred to the inspiration of Apostles. No wonder that they who preach orthodoxy as saving Faith, revealed from the first by God in a perfect form, say so little to their hearers of the history of their creeds. There is good reason why Ecclesiastical History should be little encouraged by the divines of the English, or of any other dogmatical Church. It is with good reason that the Universities show about the same degree of favour to Ecclesiastical History and to Moral Philosophy. They have an instinct that tells them of their enemies.

Let me now summarily restate the obligations of the doctrine of the Trinity to the *human* and *erring* sources of OPINION.

I. Oriental philosophy led the Jews of Alexandria, before the time of Christ, to *allegorize* the Old Testament Scriptures.

II. The Jews of Alexandria formed the connecting link between Christianity and Grecian Philosophy.

III. Platonic Theology put its own mythological meanings on the expressions *Logos*, and *Son of God*.†

* Intel. Sys. p. 602, 4.

† "It must be acknowledged that the first converts from the Platonic school took advantage of the resemblance between Evangelic and Platonic doctrine on

IV. At the beginning of the fourth century this mythological conception had gained such ground that, with a severe struggle, and a controversy that shook the world, a general Council decreed that Christ in his divine nature belonged *to the same class* of Beings with God.

V. In a *second* general Council, the third Person in the Platonic Trinity found, by public authority, a parallel in the Christian Trinity, and became, for the first time, the faith of the Church.

VI. A *third* general Council, A. D. 431, distinguished, for theological purposes, the deity from the humanity of Christ.

VII. A *fourth* general Council, A. D. 451, found it necessary, for theological purposes, to unite the deity and humanity in *one person.*

VIII. The fourth general Lateran Council, A. D. 1215, consummated the Trinity and prepared the way for the Inquisition. Having established such a faith, it became necessary to take means to enforce it. Persecution is the first-born of Dogmatism. In the phrase of Robert Hall, quoted with approbation in Christ Church as a felicitous expression, orthodoxy is "*necessitated*" to be a Persecutor, to treat as a Dæmon and Enemy of Souls every form of Christianity but her own. It is a necessity of her nature, she pleads,—a simple consistency with her own principles. True,—the reasoning is without a flaw;—but then a question arises, does a Nature of which these are the "*necessities*" breathe the spirit of Jesus? Who can think of Jesus as being *necessitated* to condemn any thing but *sin*?

Having shown how much the doctrine of the Trinity has to do with Ecclesiastical History, I have now to show how little it has to do with Scripture.

the subject of the Godhead, to apply the principles of their old philosophy to the explication and confirmation of the articles of their faith. They defended it by arguments drawn from Platonic principles, and even propounded it in Platonic *language.*"—*Bishop Horsley.*

II. It is admitted by all, Trinitarian and Unitarian alike, that a belief in ONE GOD is the first principle of a pure religion. The slightest departure from this truth involves polytheism and idolatry. One Creator, one Father, one object for our worship and our love, is the plain and broad distinction between an idolatrous religion, and the Supreme Veneration of that spiritual God who claims an undivided empire throughout the vastness of creation. A perception of this truth does not require an advanced state of Society or Mind: nor can it be proved that even in the thickness of pagan darkness it was ever doubted. Heathen Philosophy, though it might associate with the One Spirit, too pure and immoveably serene to come in contact with matter, subordinate agents of creation (which does not differ much from the Trinitarian conception*), yet could read the glory of one Mind upon the outward universe, and see one Intelligence, one Power, one Will of love diffused through Nature: Judaism had this idea for its soul: and the Gospel has republished it in such distinct and resplendent light, that it is the universal faith of Christendom. So overpowering is the evidence, so clear is Nature's testimony to the existence of one God, so conspicuously has Revelation set it forth in the centre of her splendours, that Trinitarianism, with what consistency we shall presently inquire, claims to be received as a believer in the Unity of Deity. It is a most triumphant acknowledgment of the brightness with which the great truth, that *God is One*, shines out from his Works† and from his Word, that

* See the Rev. D. James's acknowledgment of the Subordination of the Son and the Holy Spirit to the Father—of their *official* inferiority: and *the illustrations* of the King and the Duke of Wellington, which Trinitarian Theology thinks apposite.

† We were told, indeed, in Christ Church, by the Rev. D. James, that there *might* exist any number of persons in the divine Essence, three thousand as well as three, and that only because Scripture had revealed no more had Christians fixed upon that number as making up the divine Unity. And this is so clear a consequence of the principles of Trinitarian Theology, that the view must be ascribed *to all Trinitarians.* Scripture, however, though it has only revealed

even the Trinitarian perceives the necessity of reconciling his views with this fundamental principle; and rather than depart from it, he prefers to maintain that three may be one, and one may be three;—though the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, have each separately all that constitute an infinite and all-perfect God, and have distinct offices, and appear in distinct, if not directly opposed characters, yet that there may be a mysterious unity in the essence of a tri-personal Deity.

I am relieved then from the necessity of proving that God is One. It is a truth which no one explicitly denies; which the Trinitarian professes to hold as firmly as the Unitarian; and therefore as the undisputed doctrine of the Bible we take it as the admitted groundwork of our argument. We might call upon Nature to multiply proofs of the Unity of the designing Mind, which the universe reveals; we might appeal to the regularity of her silent movements and to the sublime order that reigns throughout her gliding worlds, to attest the Oneness of that Intelligence whose volitions she obeys: we might ask Philosophy whether ONE INFINITE CAUSE was not *sufficient* for the finite or infinite wonders of creation; whether in all her discoveries she has ever perceived a single evidence of a divided government; and whether eternal Laws holding immutable dominion throughout all worlds that Science has explored, are not sublimest proofs of the fidelity of the one presiding SPIRIT who trifles not

three, has not declared that there are *no more* persons in the Godhead—so that it is being wise above what is written to limit the divine MONARCHY to the ECONOMY of three Persons.

But farther than this it was declared by the Rev. D. James that nature contained *no evidence* of One God, not even in the Trinitarian sense of Oneness, for that many Gods might unite to build the world, as many men had united to build the Liverpool Custom House. What would the Architect of that building say to this invasion of the unity of his designing mind? Mr. James repeatedly informed his audience that he always appealed to reason! Such is Trinitarianism when it reasons. But I suppose this view must be considered as a peculiarity of the *individual preacher.*

with the feeble intellect of man, but reveals himself consistently to the seeking minds of His children: we might go to our own *hearts*, and feel the pressure of one divine hand upon its tumultuous affections, and ask whether in our sorrows or our joys, our wants or our aspirations, we resorted to more than one God, or needed other shelter than that of one all-sufficing Father and Friend; and, finally, we might open the volume of Revelation, and read to you the testimony of Prophets from Moses to Christ, that the Lord our God is one Lord, and there is none other but He:—but it appears it would be a needless task to prove a doctrine which no one doubts, or to treat as a question of controversy the universal faith of the Christian world.

We stand at once then upon the undisputed truth of the *Oneness* of Deity, and taking this as our uncontested vantage ground, we proceed to inquire how much is involved in the admission. What are we to understand by this sublime and unquestioned, and apparently simple truth, that God is One? There are two answers to this question, and the statement of each of them will introduce us to the Controversy. The *Unitarian* answers, that the words are human words, and of course used in a human sense; that the revelation was to man, and that no caution was given to him that he was not to attach human ideas to the language in which it is conveyed; that God is too tender and too faithful to sport with the understandings of His children, to involve their frail intelligence in inextricable perplexities; and that, therefore, when He publishes to the World, *without explanation*, the Unity of his own nature, he intends men to affix to the words the ideas always associated with them; he does not use language to mislead, but asserts the simplest and most intelligible of truths, that God is one Mind, one Person, one undivided and indivisible Spirit, to whom alone belong underived existence, and infinite perfections, and unshared dominion. These are the only ideas our minds ordinarily attach to such

language,—this is the only experience we have of Unity; and if the words, when applied to God, bear a different meaning, and so have a tendency to deceive us, some caution, we think, would have been given by a God who was delivering a *Revelation* to his Children. The Unitarian believes that a revelation from God is a revelation of *light*; and without any temptation to pervert the meaning of words, he receives, in the simple and ordinary import of the language, the plain and reiterated announcement that "God is one." If God used human words, he surely used them for the purpose of conveying ideas to human minds; for language is not necessary to Him, much less would human language be the vehicle of His infinite thought. If, then, He used the words in a sense not human, and therefore unknown to us, instead of instructing, it would betray and mislead.

The *Trinitarian* answers, that though he believes in the Unity of God, yet that Unity is totally different from the unity of all other beings. He believes that in the One God there are *three* distinct and infinite persons, presenting themselves to human contemplation in different characters, and as the objects of different affections; the first reigning in Heaven, the second in intimate and inseparable connection with a dying man upon the Earth; the first immutable in his immensity, the other *coming* down from his eternal throne to wrap his infinite essence in a covering of human flesh; the Father sending the Son, and the Son satisfying the demands of the Father; the Father the cause and origin of all things, but holding himself loftily apart, whilst the Holy Spirit takes the office of communion with men, and becomes the Comforter, Teacher, and spiritual Friend of the human souls, whom the Father's creative energies, acting through the Son, have called into existence. This, then, is the doctrine of the Trinity: three equal Persons, each Supreme, each a perfect and infinite Deity, and yet so united as to constitute but one *undivided* God.

We are tauntingly told of the vague statements of Unitarian Doctrine. Now nothing can be more unjust than this, or farther from the facts. "Controversially described," Unitarianism is the most definite thing imaginable. It simply says, *No*, to every one of the allegations of Trinitarianism. There are, at the very least, five different forms in which the doctrine of the Trinity has been explained and defended; and to every one of these five shifting modifications, we repeat our definite *negative*. There is the widest difference among Trinitarian Theologians as to their method of stating and explaining the influence of Atonement and of Original Sin; and to every one of these varieties we equally repeat our simple negative. Where, then, is the superior definiteness of Trinitarian statements? We affirm, of all its characteristic doctrines, that they are untenable *in any form whatever*. This, surely, is definite enough.

I am not aware that I have stated the doctrine of the Trinity in a way which any Trinitarian could disown; and the first observation I make upon it is this, that in this view of the oneness of God, in connecting the deity of the Father, and the deity of the Son, and the deity of the Holy Spirit, with a strict *unity* in the godhead, the Trinitarian has at least departed from the ordinary acceptation of language. We will not assert the absolute impossibility of his retaining a belief in the Unity of God, because we have no right to question his own solemn assertion of the fact, or to set limits to the powers of another's faith; but he will not deny that he believes God to be one, in a sense totally different from that in which he believes himself to be one; that it is a unity of three minds, each a perfect God, and capable of acting separately,—in so much that it is a warning of the Creeds,—not to confound the Persons. It is not a unity of Mind, nor a unity of Will, nor a unity of Agency, nor a unity of Person, which the Trinitarian regards as constituting the Unity of God, but *three* Minds, *three* Wills, *three* Agents, *three* Per-

sons, mysteriously making one Deity. I ask, were it not for the overpowering brightness with which the Bible reveals the doctrine of one God, would the Trinitarian encumber himself with the difficulty of combining it with his other views; would he not rather simply confess that three persons made three beings, and not one being; and represent the world as under the threefold, but harmonious, government of a Creator, a Saviour, and a sanctifying Spirit?

We have thus, then, two admissions on the part of the Trinitarian, which I ask you distinctly to bear in mind. He admits the Unity of God; and he admits that when he attempts to combine that Unity with a Trinity, he uses the word in an unintelligible sense, and understands, or rather *marks*, by it something entirely different from the oneness of any other being,—a oneness in short of which he himself is capable of forming no conception. That is, he retains the form of *words* that God is one; but these words convey to him no distinct idea,—and yet words are the signs of human ideas;—he confesses that God is not one in any sense of that word that he can comprehend; and that, therefore, when he professes his faith in the Unity of God, he is using language which is unintelligible even to himself. This he must acknowledge, for he calls the Trinity a mystery; but the mystery he will admit is in the Unity, not in the Trinity: the mystery (that is, the no-meaningness to man, for this is the only meaning the word will here bear, the difficulty being not in the vastness or spirituality of the Conceptions, but in their irreconcilableness,) is not that there are three Persons, but that the three are *one*. Now this is the confession of every Trinitarian: he can form very distinct notions of the Trinity, but he admits that he cannot reconcile these notions with any human idea of unity; it is unintelligible, it is inconceivable, it is an apparent contradiction to all other men, to him only a paradox; it is an unfathomable mystery (a sad desecration of that solemn word); but still he professes to

believe it,—he maintains that he can hold "the form of sound words;" and as to *thoughts*, it is his duty to have none upon the subject. He *knows* that it is revealed that God is One; and he *thinks* it is revealed that God is in Three; and without any attempt to harmonize these two statements, he professes to believe them both.

Now taking our stand on the conceded truth that God is *revealed* to be one, we ask for equal evidence that He is revealed to be Three Persons. We ask throughout the Bible for one plain assertion of this doctrine. We shall be satisfied with even one, and we think it is not asking much. We ask but for a single text in which it is declared that there are three infinite Minds in the Unity of but one infinite God.

It is admitted that there is no distinct statement of this doctrine in any part of the Scriptures; and here again we rest upon another confession of all instructed Trinitarians,* that this mystery is nowhere found in express terms; that if taught at all it is taught by implication; that it is no part of the direct revelation, but merely an inference which may be collected from certain appearances, certain verbal phenomena. Now I ask if this doctrine was intended to be revealed, *could it have been so left*? If the Trinity is as strictly true as the Unity, could the one have had the witness of Prophets and Apostles, and shine forth as the clearest light on the revealed page, whilst the other was left to be gathered from some obscure and incidental intimations which the most gifted minds have not been able to perceive? Is it credible that if the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, were three Persons in one God, there should be *nowhere in the Bible a single*

* Who are the competent Critics, of whom Mr. Byrth speaks as retaining the text of the three Heavenly Witnesses? The Bishop of Salisbury, I suppose. If this had been Unitarian Criticism, Mr. Byrth would have called it *defective* Scholarship or dishonesty. He can discriminate in favour of those who err upon his own side. See a curious statement of the external evidence affecting this text, 1 John v. 7, in the second volume of Burton's Theological Works, p. 114, 2nd part.

statement of that truth;* and ought not this extraordinary fact make us very cautious to try the soundness of the *inferences, human and erring modes of reasoning*, upon which, as upon its foundation, this stupendous doctrine is laid?

There are two passages in the Bible, and only two, in which God, and Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit are mentioned together. It is recorded in St. Matthew's Gospel as the last words of the risen Jesus, that he ascended to his Father, leaving to the world the legacy of his truth—"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name (properly into the name) of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"—baptizing them into a belief of God, and of Christ, and of the power and comfort of the Holy Spirit accompanying the truth, and witnessing to it in the hearts of all who receive it purely.† The Apostle declares of the Jews that they were baptized into Moses, and the Evangelist declares of Christians that they were baptized into Christ, (see also Rom. vi. 3; Gal. iii. 27,) and the plain meaning of such language is that they were baptized into the Truth which God had revealed through Moses and through Christ. What support then is there here for the doctrine of a Trinity? Is this indeed the strongest scriptural evidence that Trinitarianism can boast of—that because three distinctions follow one another—God, and his Prophet, and his Spirit witnessing to his truth in the hearts and before the eyes of His children—therefore the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God in communication with man, must be a person, distinct from God, because the other two words express persons

* "It is reasonable to expect, that those doctrines, which form the leading articles of any system, *should be plainly stated in the book* which professes to make that system known."—*Wardlaw.*

† "'Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' That is, 'Go ye therefore into all the world, and teach or disciple all nations, baptizing them into the profession of faith in, and an obligation to obey the doctrine taught by Christ, with authority from God the Father, and confirmed by the Holy Ghost.'"—*Lardner.*

—and therefore these three are co-equal and are one. Such is the Interpretation that produces Trinitarianism. Is there a single hint in this passage of three persons in one God? What can be made out of it more than the Saviour's last injunction to his followers, to carry through the world that glorious and sanctifying truth, which the one God manifested through his well-beloved Son, and accompanied with the energy of his spirit. The Holy Spirit is a Scripture expression for *God in communication with man*, naturally or supernaturally.

The *only other* passage in which Jesus Christ, and God, and the Holy Spirit, are mentioned in the same sentence, must receive a precisely similar explanation. St. Paul concludes the Second Epistle to the Corinthians in these words—"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." Now what is this but a beautiful and affectionate prayer that the Corinthians might be partakers of the grace of God that was in Jesus Christ, of the love of their Heavenly Father, and of the gifts and influences of his holy spirit? Indeed this passage, like all others brought to prove the Trinity, is of itself quite sufficient to overthrow that doctrine. The name God in it, is not applied to Jesus Christ nor to the holy spirit: and to prove that holy spirit does not mean a person, but the spiritual energies of God in communication with man, the word *communion* is used:—a participation or communion of *a person* is without meaning—a communion in holy and heavenly influences is beautiful and everlasting truth. Such are the only pretences that Trinitarianism puts forth, that it is openly taught in Scripture! We ask for no other passages scripturally to disprove the doctrine.

Let us now attend to that *inferential* reasoning by which it is attempted to be proved that Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are united with the Father, to form three persons in

one God. There are some texts in which divine attributes are supposed to be ascribed to Jesus, and the same mode of reasoning being applied to the Holy Spirit, *it is inferred* that Christ is God, and that the Holy Spirit is God—and that to preserve the consistency of Scripture, it is necessary to maintain both that God is One, and that God is Three. Now I ask, does not this look like a seeking of evidence for the doctrine *after* Ecclesiastical History had introduced it, under the influences and motives already described, rather than like the natural way in which such a doctrine would break from Revelation itself upon the notice of the world? Had not the doctrine its true origin in human and worldly influences, and then was not an origin sought for it in the Orientalisms of Scripture language? This then is the method of *reasoning* by which this doctrine, so vast, so awful, if it be true, is attempted to be proved; and upon the soundness of this *inferential* process does Trinitarianism depend. So that Orthodoxy after all its sneers against the pride of Human Reason, depends for its own life upon the correctness of human reasonings,—and then erects the results of this *process of fallible reasoning* into the Essentials of Salvation.

There are several passages in which Christ is supposed to be called God, though there is not, I think, one clear instance of such an application of the word; and even if there was, we have Christ's own interpretation of the only sense in which such language could be applied to him. "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods? if he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, 'Thou blasphemest;' because I said I am the Son of God?"*

There are only two passages in the whole gospels, in which the title has ever been supposed to be given to Christ, and

* John x. 34.

these both occurring in the same gospel, so that three of the gospels never were even supposed to have a trace of such language. One of these passages in the Proem of St. John's Gospel has already been explained in the course of the present Controversy, and the other is the expression of Thomas, who, the moment before he made the exclamation, knew so little of Christ and of Christianity that he would not believe that Jesus was risen from the dead. It is from the lips of the unbeliever of one moment, and the inspired of the next, that we are to receive the high mystery of the Trinity. But in truth the exclamation of Thomas will not bear to be sobered down into a revelation of doctrines—"My Lord, and my God!" The first of these clauses was an exclamation of surprise, a sudden and passionate recognition of Jesus; the second was the natural and immediate transference (common in cases of supernatural impression, with all minds, pious or profane,) of the thoughts of Thomas to that awful and wonder-working God, whose power and presence were so visibly manifested in the resurrection of his Christ. There is no evidence, in the remainder of the gospel, or in the book of the Acts, or throughout the New Testament, that Thomas, or the rest of the Apostles, for a moment believed that Jesus was God. Now, since this was a doctrine that they certainly had no conception of, previous to the death of Christ, there must have been an occasion, when, if true, it broke for *the first time* on the astonished minds of the disciples. Now is it possible to believe that such an occasion could have passed *unmarked*—that no amazement, no awe would *be expressed*—and that as we follow them in their course, we should be unable to distinguish between the moments when they did not, and the moments when they did understand, that the being with whom they had been living in familiar intercourse was the everlasting God? Could such a discovery burst upon any human mind, and that mind manifest no emotion—not a ripple on the current of sentiment and feeling to show when

it was that these disciples first began to know that they had been the familiar friends of the living God? I confidently state that the thing is not credible nor possible. The disciples would not have been human, if such things could be. We know that after the ascension, as before, they always speak of him as "the *man* approved by God, by signs and miracles which God did by him, and whom God raised from the dead?" Do such things admit of explanation from the known course of human sentiments and emotions, if Trinitarianism is true? We think not.

There is another passage in the Gospels supposed to teach the deity of Christ—and hence so far used as an inferential proof of the doctrine of the Trinity:—"I and my Father are one." Beautiful expression of the soul of Christ, excelled in beauty only by that life which yet more spiritually declared that He and his Father were one, for "what the Son seeth the Father do, these also doeth the Son likewise!" Why are we compelled to examine coldly, or turn an instant from the deep religious meaning of this perfect filial utterance of the Son of God? It expresses that harmony of purpose with God which is the result and peace of the spirit of true religion, and which was perfect in the mind of Jesus, because in him was perfect the spirit of faith in Providence, of trustful submission to his Father's will. "The cup that my Father hath given me, shall I not drink of it?" Well might *he* say, and yet how wondrous it is that any being could say, and yet retain his intense humanity, "I and my Father are one!" Clear proof of the inspiration of the Christ! But how the beauty fades away if this very being was God himself, and all his submission of will is but an artifice of words! How hard, artificial, and unlovely, does the ever fresh gospel become when submitted to the tortures of systems, and system-makers! What a difference in genuine spiritual power on the heart of man between Jesus living and dying in the peace of *faith*, in the trust that a holy God will keep the destinies of a holy

mind, that his Providence will recompense the Right—and Jesus not living and dying in the strength of the *moral* elements of faith, but actually associated with the omniscient mind of God, so as to be an inseparable person! Such should be the difference between the genuine spiritual energy of Unitarian and Trinitarian representations of Christianity.

Jesus, in the context, explains in what sense he uses this beautiful expression, "I and my Father are one," and he there positively denies that the employment of it implies any claim of equality with God. Let our Lord be his own interpreter, and let the solemn and affecting words I am about to quote, silence for ever the vain plea, that this exquisite expression of the moral sentiment and spirit of Jesus, was intended to be doctrinal and Trinitarian. If so, there is equal proof for all Christians being portions of the Godhead. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us:—and the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; *that they may be one, even as we are one*; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." *

The only other passage of any force in which deity is supposed to be accorded to Jesus, † I do not notice here, because it has already been abundantly examined in the present Controversy.

I would now call your attention to the precise state of the argument so far as we have advanced in it. We have taken for granted the Unity of God, which no Christian denies. We have found that the belief of three persons in one God is not reconcilable with any *human* conception of that admitted unity: we have found that there was no *direct* evidence in the Bible for the doctrine of the Trinity: and lastly,

* John xvii. 20, 23. † Rom. ix. 5.

we have examined some of the very strongest passages of Scripture, on which that doctrine is attempted to be established, *through an inferential mode of reasoning.*

I might stop here then, and without looking at the Scripture evidence against the doctrine, but only the evidence in its favour, declare that such a doctrine could not possibly have such an insufficient publication. The very passages brought forward to sustain it, disprove it. They all speak of derived powers, and of glory communicated. They are all in the strain,—"Therefore God, even *his* God, hath highly exalted him, and *given* him a name that is above every name." Nay, take that passage, than which there is none in which dominion is more emphatically ascribed to Christ, and see how it closes:—"and when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that did put all things under him, that God may be all in all."—1 Cor. xv. 28. We shall not, however, treat Trinitarianism so lightly as to dismiss it, unproved upon its own showing; we shall not rest satisfied with pointing out the insufficiency of its Scriptural authority, but bring against it the overpowering force of opposing Scripture; and as we have given specimens of the biblical evidence for, advance something of the biblical evidence against, the Trinity.

In the first place, then, this doctrine cannot be true, because there are some passages in which *it is expressly and plainly* declared that the Father alone is the one God, not the Father, *and* the Son, *and* the Spirit, but the FATHER. "Father!—this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." "But to us there is but ONE GOD, the FATHER, of whom are all things, and we in Him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

"There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in *you* all."

"Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in Heaven; *neither the Son*, but the Father."

These declarations are surely sufficient to protect Unitarianism from having no warrant in Scripture. They contain direct, positive, definite assertions; they assert that there is one God, and that Jesus Christ is *not* that God. It is not possible for human language to express more clearly or more guardedly the simple faith of Unitarian Christianity. Yet we are told that only the ingenuity of heretics has obliged Trinitarians to have recourse to unscriptural language. Strange, certainly, that Holy Writ should have itself expressed the creeds of heresy and damnable error, and rendered it impossible to express in its sacred words the Creeds of Truth!

I quote, in the second place, some passages out of a multitude, in which ideas are connected with Christ which are utterly inconsistent with the supposition of his deity. "I came not to do mine own will." "I can of myself do nothing." "If I honour myself, my honour is nothing; it is my Father that honoureth me."—John viii. 54. "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he *given* to the Son to have life in himself."—John v. 26. "As the living Father hath sent me, and I *live by the Father*."—John vi. 57. "I have not spoken of myself, but the Father who sent me, He gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak."—John xii. 49, 50.

"The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me."—John xiv. 24.

"I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God."—John xx. 17.

"When ye have lifted up the Son of man on high, then shall ye know that I am *he*, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me I speak these things."—John viii. 28.

Ecclesiastical History has already acquainted us with the device that sets aside the plain meaning of these passages. It is said that Jesus Christ had *two natures*, was composed of two minds, that he was both man and God; and thus does Trinitarianism openly assert mysteries of an opposite character. Three Persons in one Essence is unintelligible enough; but no sooner is this propounded to us, than we are called off to a directly opposite mystery of two Essences in one Person. And here we cannot be put off with the metaphysical sophistry that we do not know the nature of God, for we do know something of the nature of *man*; and we do say that never was there a greater abuse of the moral meanings of the word Faith, than to set forth, that God's nature and man's nature so united together as to form one inseparable person, may be embraced as an object of Faith. The true nature and office of Faith is to carry us from the seen to the unseen, —to give us moral confidence in that world which we do not see, from our moral experience in this world which we do see,—and in that portion of God's ways which the future conceals, from what we know of that portion of them which the present unfolds. Faith is moral, not metaphysical; and, above all, finds no merit and no efficacy in assenting to unmeaning words.

As before, of the doctrine of the Trinity, so now of this doctrine of the Hypostatic Union, as it is called, I ask for a single hint throughout the New Testament of the inconceivable fact that, in the body of Jesus, resided the mind of God and the mind of man,—two natures, the one finite, the other infinite, yet making but one person,—a difficulty you will perceive the very opposite of that of the Trinity; for whereas it teaches three persons in one nature, this teaches two natures in one person. But we have already traced, in Ecclesiastical History, the origin of this view, and the necessity of its appearance, in subservience to the doctrine of the Trinity.

I will only apply one scriptural test to this theory of the two natures in Christ. And it is one from which Trinitarians cannot escape by their ordinary refuge of avoiding one set of statements by referring them to the humanity of Jesus, and another set of statements by referring them to his deity. It is God the Son, whom Trinitarians represent as becoming incarnate in the body of Jesus; it was God the Son who took humanity into union with deity; therefore whenever Jesus, in his human nature, speaks of the divinity that dwelt within him, inspired him, and wrought through him, it must be God the Son to whom he refers. But this is never the case; Scripture does not know this doctrine, nor support its requisitions. It is always, "*the Father* who dwelleth in me, He doeth the works."

It was asserted in Christ Church, that if there is not a plurality of persons in the godhead, the oriental style, "let us make man in our own image," and the use of the plural where we use the singular, made the word of God an agent of deception, and affected the morality of the divine mind. This is bold language; and, considering the evidence, as unscholarlike as bold. We refrain from a retort in the same spirit. We look with unaffected wonder upon the mind that is reckless enough, and ignorant enough of the sources of error within itself, to dare to say, "if I am not right in my interpretation of Scripture, God is a deceiver." Yet such men can charge others with making themselves judges of revelation, and saying what God *must* mean.

I have not taken up that other thread of supposed scriptural intimations, which is thought to connect the Holy Spirit as a third Person in the unity of the godhead. This portion of the argument, strangely neglected by Trinitarians, who generally take for granted the deity and personality of the Holy Ghost as following without debate from the deity of Christ, since three not two is the favourite mythological and theological number, is however to form the subject of a sepa-

rate Lecture in Christ Church, not yet delivered. Why there should be any necessity, on Trinitarian principles of theology, for a third person in the Godhead to perform "*the work*," as it is called, of the spirit of God in communication with man, after the sacrifice of Christ had left the Father's love free to operate, we cannot perceive, except upon the Platonic principle, that the Supreme One in the Trinity is an Essence perfectly abstracted, immoveable, and without action. Not wishing, however, to anticipate the argument, I shall only adduce one remarkable passage, in proof that the Holy Spirit could not, in the first age of the Gospel, have a deity and personality ascribed to it distinct from the deity and personality of God the Father. When Paul came to Ephesus, he found there some disciples, of whom he inquired,—"Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed?" The answer is remarkable: "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." Now is it possible that the Holy Ghost should be the third person of the Trinity, a constituent person in the Christian God, and that these "believers," though only disciples of John, should have been uninstructed in the doctrine? The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, God himself in communication with man, naturally or supernaturally, the enlightening influence of the Spiritual Father revealing Himself to the spiritual nature of His children.

I do not know what may appear convincing to other minds, but to me the Ecclesiastical History of the doctrine of the Trinity, with its rise in *human* sources of Philosophy and Motive, and not in Revelation, seems a fact capable of being most clearly traced. Rarely indeed does the origin of an error so conspicuously disclose itself: rarely is its course so open to observation. On the other hand, if there is not decisive proof in Scripture of the strict and personal Unity of God, I must think that it is vain to prove any doctrine from the words of the Bible—for sure I am that there is no

doctrine more distinctly, more guardedly, more simply, more repeatedly stated, than the great doctrine, that there is One God, and that the FATHER is that God.

We are told that the "invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead." Yet the Universe reveals no Trinity. Reason knows and requires no Trinity. Natural Religion is not Trinitarian. Scripture speaks of One God the Father, and of One Lord Jesus Christ. Gentile Philosophy and Ecclesiastical History *are* Trinitarian. In *their* pages we find this subject. Ecclesiastical History has narrated the rise and progress of these doctrines—and to Ecclesiastical History shall they finally be referred,—when another chapter is added, a chapter that unhappily yet remains to be written, the history of their decline and fall.

MAN, THE IMAGE OF GOD.

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN

PARADISE STREET CHAPEL,

LIVERPOOL,

ON TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 1839.

BY

REV. HENRY GILES.

BEING THE EIGHTH OF A SERIES, TO BE DELIVERED WEEKLY, IN ANSWER TO A COURSE OF LECTURES AGAINST UNITARIANISM, IN CHRIST CHURCH, LIVERPOOL, BY THIRTEEN CLERGYMEN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

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1839.

LECTURE VIII.

MAN, THE IMAGE OF GOD.

BY REV. HENRY GILES.

"FOR A MAN INDEED OUGHT NOT TO COVER HIS HEAD, FORASMUCH AS HE IS THE IMAGE AND GLORY OF GOD."—1 *Cor.* xi. 7.

"AND WHEN HE CAME TO HIMSELF, HE SAID—HOW MANY HIRED SERVANTS OF MY FATHER'S HAVE BREAD ENOUGH AND TO SPARE, AND I PERISH WITH HUNGER. I WILL ARISE, AND GO TO MY FATHER, AND WILL SAY UNTO HIM,—FATHER, I HAVE SINNED AGAINST HEAVEN AND BEFORE THEE, AND AM NO MORE WORTHY TO BE CALLED THY SON; MAKE ME AS ONE OF THY HIRED SERVANTS."—*Luke* xv. 17—19.

We are often told that man was originally created in the image of his Maker; and, in the same connection, we are told that, in his fall, he lost it. If this be true, we might expect that Scripture writers, in alluding to fallen man, would never ascribe to him so holy a resemblance. Paul, however, does it in one of the texts I have quoted; and Paul is not alone in this ascription. In an ordinance to Noah, immediately after the deluge, we find the same truth made the foundation of a most solemn injunction. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."* Had the resemblance of God been effaced from the soul of man in the fall of Adam, there had been in this ordinance neither meaning nor solemnity. Since, therefore, the sacred writer uses the fact of man's likeness to God to stamp deeper guilt on the crime of murder;

* Gen. ix. 6.

since, moreover, that fact is alleged after the narration of the fall,—we are justified by Scripture in claiming this high and glorious distinction for our universal nature.

I have quoted the second text, because the principle implied in it is identical with that which I stand here to maintain, namely, that sin is not of our nature, but against it; that it is not consistent with it, but contradictory to it; that to be sinful, is not to be natural, but unnatural. Sin, properly speaking, is moral delirium; and the progress towards that last paroxysm which, by revulsion, arouses the soul from its madness, is eloquently symbolised in the parable from which my second text is taken. Having tried all that sin could offer him; having sunk to the very husks of carnal appetites, and vainly sought thus to satisfy the hunger of an immortal soul, wearied, disappointed, and disgusted; satiated, but not satisfied, the prodigal arises from his torpor; he awakens from his wildering dream; the delirium that so long beset him is dispersed; with a calm and clear brain he finds himself in open day-light, and discerns the empty and unsubstantial vanities for which, in a false hope, he spent his labour and his strength, to reap at last, in the bitterness of a repentant heart, nothing but grief, tribulation, and anguish.

Sin is not a following of nature, but a violence on it; not conformity, but contradiction to it. And so, as when returning life beats in the palsied heart, or the dawn of reason bursts again on the madman's brain, the prodigal is said "to come to himself;" when the spirit of moral renovation opens on him with compunctuous visitings of nature, and reveals to him a full sense of his condition. In his guilt he was at variance with all the moral instincts of humanity; and, in the sorrow of repentance, he needed as much to be at peace with himself as with his father. It is universally thus. God has established a certain order and harmony in *our* nature, appointed to each faculty a place and a pur-

pose; and, in disturbing this arrangement, we become transgressors. We cannot sin against God without also sinning against our own souls, for in them is the primitive revelation of God; and in thus sinning against our own souls, we may practically resist all the divine attributes of which our weak faculties are the dim reflection; God's wisdom in the abuse of our intellect; his greatness in the loss of our moral dignity; his goodness in the destruction of our charities; his purity in the corruption of our hearts. Unitarians are accused of making sin a light matter. We protest against the justice of the accusation. We hold sin to be the greatest of evils, and the most dire of miseries. We hold it not as a mere social impropriety, but we regard it as a dark disloyalty against conscience and against God. Much suffering, we know, it inflicts on society; but slight, indeed, is it compared with the ruin and devastation it works in our own souls. Here, at first, God impressed his image; here, at last, he fixes his tribunal: it is here his voice was heard in kindness, it is here it shall be also heard in judgment. God's government is, like himself, spiritual. Man rules by outward power, God by inward inspiration; and it is the peculiarity of the divine legislation that, in the same individual, it attaches the condemnation to the crime; forces transgression, to pronounce its own sentence, and to inflict its own punishment. Human society has set up various bulwarks to guard its security; human law-givers have accompanied their enactments with fiercest penalties; and before Draco, and since, millions upon millions of God's erring creatures have been offered, a sanguinary sacrifice to justice: superstition has personified all hideous evil in Satan,—the mighty sinner of creation,—the minister of eternal vengeance,—the great executioner of the universe; superstition has spread the limitless prisons of hell, and filled them with tortures, and lit those flames which it asserts are kept burning by the breath of an angry God, and are never to be quenched during his everlasting existence;

but we assert, there is no scorn of society, there is no torture of most cruel laws, there is no hell of superstition, deep, burning, and eternal as it may be, that can equal the agonies which man's own sense of wrong and degradation heap upon his overwhelmed and sunken spirit. The glory of an immortal soul is beyond all outward glories; the majesty of empires and crowns, the splendour of the sun, the beauty of the firmament, the riches of the universe, are nothing in comparison. We say to those to whom it is our privilege to minister, though you were stripped of all that constitute your frail and present happiness; though saddest reverses became your lot; though God laid his hand heavily upon you and your family, tore you from that rank and station that now make your glory; though your children and friends were one by one snatched from you, until you stood in the world-wilderness like a branchless and a blasted tree; though all illness of body and grief of mind were yours,—having an upright soul, it is but a light affliction compared with a guilty conscience, which could wield over earth a universal sceptre. The wages of sin is death,—death in the most tremendous meaning of that tremendous word,—death of purity, death of holy confidence, death of self-respect, death of inward and outward peace. Sin is misery, and the worst of miseries, —one that carries with it its own vengeance, is self-punished and self-cursed. True, we recognize no omnipresent and invisible tempter; true, we hold no gross and eternal punishment; we preach no original malediction, and no inherent depravity; we proclaim no sin which blots out all light and hope around the mercy-seat of God, and scathes the heart of man with everlasting despair. True, we show you no maniac penitents, bewildered in the madness of remorse, shrieking on the death-bed which conscience peoples with furies. We announce no deity coming from heaven, putting on the frail istence of humanity, and expiating on the cross the sin ich had closed all access to peace. We cannot, and if we

could we would not, freeze your hearts with ideas of torture, nor appal you with threatenings, nor echo on your ears the groans that never cease, the weepings, the wailings, the knashing of teeth, the sighs and hopeless complainings that swell for ever and ever a thickening smoke of torment. Independently of these things, there are other considerations more solemn,—more solemn, because more true,—there is our conscience; there is our peace; there is the dignity of our whole spiritual nature; there is reverence for duty; there is the power to enjoy what is pure and beautiful; there is fitness for communion with God, with all the righteous and the excellent,—these may be lost, or clouded by sin; and they may be so lost as never fully to be recovered. We count sin no slight evil, either as to its inward spirit or outward influence: as I have stated, so we preach. And here, once for all, I enter my protest against the impeachment which charges us with stripping guilt of its danger and its awfulness.

I. Human nature, according to the point from which we regard it, has a good or an evil aspect, each perfectly distinct, and each perfectly true. The whole truth is then in neither separately, but in both conjointly. Fixing too intently on either, and carrying our ideas to extremes, we may, on the one side, flatter human nature above its merits; or, on the other, be guilty towards it of injustice: on the one side see in it all possible good, and on the other nothing but incorrigible evil: on the one side soar into Utopianism, and on the other descend into Calvinism. The Calvinistic view we hold to be false, the Utopian impossible. We have no idea of any perfect goodness or perfect happiness in this world, either possessed or to be attained. Whilst we pace our way in this earthly pilgrimage, sin and suffering must more or less track our steps; the prodigal's confession, and the publican's prayer, must still be ours; the most favoured of God's children have to meet, and bear their allotted griefs,—to see their glory grow dim, the desire of their eyes

vanish, and to look onward and backward through the mist of tears. Sufficient of stern realities press upon us to crush at once the vision of a painless and sinless beatitude. Physical wants and sufferings, the inevitable condition of our mortal nature, were there no other, are of themselves equal to the purpose. While an hospital exists among men, breathing with groans and sickly in its very look; while a deathbed is found, steeped in the weepings of affliction; whilst a stone marks and commemorates a spot where the dust is sacred to affection and to sorrow; the wildest dreamer has enough to rebuke his enthusiasm, and to cool it into soberness. And extreme or exaggerated expectations of our nature, are in still stronger contradiction to our moral constitution than our physical. In every individual, however humble his grade, and however sluggish his faculties, there is abundance to make him aware that perfection here is neither his condition nor his destiny,—numberless desires, passions, hopes, fears, expectancies; and no one imagines that all his desires are to be gratified, all his passions fulfilled, all his hopes accomplished, all his fears removed, all his expectancies realized. Want and wish pursue their strife to the end. As it is with the individual, so is it with society: for as society is an aggregate of individual persons, social character is an aggregate of individual characters. Evils, sins, and sorrows, must always, we fear, exist, both in the depths and on the surface of the great community: we look for no period in future time, when those antagonist passions and rivalries shall be extinct—which place man into resisting contact to man, when riches, and fame, and power, shall not be sought for with avidity and strife, and create the throng of passions which spring from their desire and their abuse: we look for no period when the strong universally will use their strength in righteousness and mercy, when the poor and the weak shall cease to be victims, and have full justice done to them: we dare scarcely hope for a period when the massive

throne of tyranny, whether political or sacerdotal, should be swept away upon the flood of emancipated progression; and, with equal fear, we think of the tyrannies of caste and creed, not less dark or obstinate; and although not entirely in despair, we look forward with timid anticipation to a time when the war of opinion shall be changed for Christian peace, and the fierce cry of bigotry give place to the hymn with which the angels sung our Saviour's birth. We see no prospect that men shall lay aside their selfishness, and act in the spirit of universal charity, or that they shall so curb it as to harmonize it with the good of others! that they shall become universally disinterested, forbearing, candid, and generous; that the proud man will put off his scorn, and the oppressor break or throw away his sceptre. Moral and social evils will unquestionably be mitigated, but the sources of them lie too deep for extinction,—were extinction desirable, which it is not: for these elements of our nature are wrong only accidentally; while, essentially, they are right. Knowing that an argument gains nothing by concealing the objections to it, I have thus far been liberal in admissions: I will make one admission more. I acknowledge that an over-estimate of the actual condition and prospects of human nature, as well as their undue depreciation, is likely to have injurious consequences. One of the worst is this: that, creating vivid and unreal hopes, they rebound with harsh and cruel disappointments; the fervour of expectation turns into despair; the glow of generous, but blasted enthusiasm, cools down into apathy, if it does not wither into cynicism; exstacy that was too intense to last, and too extravagant to be well founded, either renounces altogether its early faith, or, casting away its hope, complains through life in grief and despondency. Desires, bright and beautiful, are broken, and their light scattered in the dust. Aspirations, once too big for utterance, turn back to the bosom that nourished them,—hitherto their palace, now their prison,—and there waste away in hopeless thinking, or die in

the echoes of unavailing murmurs. Such mistakes are to be lamented, but not to be scorned; for that suffering is not to be despised which has its foundation in profound and extensive sympathy. And it is not in the power of minds more obtuse and slow to measure or conceive the pain of those who, with a moral imagination that goes out to the very limits of humanity, and a piercing sensibility that enters into the hidden places where suffering weeps unnoted, and sin lies down unredeemed, that in the spirit of unselfish love feels the woe and guilt of a race, as though they were personal afflictions, it is not easy, I say, to estimate the pain such men undergo: when some conjuncture of events, which seemed the dawn of virtue, of liberty, of peace, of brotherhood, turns out a mockery and a contradiction; when they live to see that their noblest aspirings were but as the babblings of vanity; that the circumstances of which they augured most hopefully, proved as empty as shapes of vapour painted by the rising sun; that changes, of which they prophesied in most exulting strains, reversed all their calculations. This is no vague speculation; there have been many instances in fact, and we can imagine many more. Had Luther been defeated in his attempt for religious reformation; had Howard departed to his rest with the sorrowful conviction that he left cells as dark, and prisoners as hopeless, as he found them; had Wilberforce closed his life in despair of all redemption for the slave; had Washington fought in vain the fight for independence, seeing no prospect for his country, but submissively to bear the yoke for ever; we have no doubt that each would have experienced a more oppressive anguish than from the keenest of personal afflictions. In such cases there were, of course, the soundness of conception and wisdom of execution which ensure success; but in others, it often happens that the disappointment is not the less bitter because the expectations were baseless.

Opposed to this scheme is that of rigid Calvinism. By

the latter system the whole nature is described as hopelessly corrupt, and language affords no colouring which can give shades deep enough for the theological picture. Minutest analysis is used to prove man such a being, that when considered you find him to be a compound of fiend and brute—such a being that you wonder God would allow him to disgrace existence, to pollute creation, and not annihilate, and blot him out from the universe, such a being that if correctly described the very continuance of society becomes a miracle and a marvel. His intellect, we are told, is utterly and spiritually darkened, his will the slave of sin, set to work iniquity greedily, his imagination corrupt, his passions rebellious, his affections perverted, incapable of good in thought, word, or deed, and completely devoted to evil. Taking this view as correct, we might suppose the prime use of man's understanding was to devise wickedness, of his memory to prolong the thoughts of it, of his will to form only guilty resolves, and of his passions to riot in all that is vile and ungodly. We have thus the whole spiritual and moral man steeped in black and hateful infamy. To sustain these assertions, appeal is made to experience; and proof is found of entire and universal depravity in history, laws, and literature. Any conclusion drawn from these goes but to testify what we are ready to concede, that man is an imperfect being, and that the evidence of his imperfection is stamped upon most of his actions and productions. But the testimony is partially and unjustly quoted. Another estimate of the same evidence would argue as strongly, and even more so, for the inherent goodness of man. If we take the instance of human laws it will at once illustrate and confirm my assertion. If laws prove the existence and universality of crime, they prove also the existence and universality of the sense of justice, for laws, so far as they embody general principles, are the expression of common and collective-sentiments. Indirectly, they prove yet more: for, after all, the great mass of

truth and rectitude exists independently of laws, is such as no law could reach, is in fact such that without it no laws could have a moment's force. In the effort to make good an indictment against human nature, an industry and labour are expended, as perverse as they are pertinacious; the lowest purlieus of depravity are raked, the deepest mines of wickedness are worked with a zeal as ardent as the veriest miser would seek for hidden treasure, the blackest evils of the worst times are adduced, the pages of history that are the most darkly stained, are torn out and severed from the context; and for what purpose is all this? Why, to make the noblest work of God odious; to vilify that nature which was glorified in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. If human nature is so thoroughly depraved and vile, as so frequently asserted, the scheme of orthodoxy is most improbable, and a fallen humanity, as it paints humanity, instead of giving Christianity consistency, renders it the most perplexing of paradoxes. For if man be thus naturally vile and depraved—corrupted in every faculty, whence these high counsels in heaven concerning him; whence the union of three infinite and co-eternal persons to save a wretch, the extinction of whom would have been mercy to the universe; whence the counsels of the Father, the incarnation of the Son, and that death of a God-man on Calvary, at which we are told the angels trembled and creation stood aghast; along with all, the constant and supernatural agency of the Holy Spirit? If man be really as worthless and as wicked as we are often told he is, all this, (with reverence I speak it,) seems a want of wisdom and a waste of strength. Though it may be considered over bold I will go a step further. If the one sin of Adam was to work such complete ruin in all his countless posterity; if it was to be the source of such an irremediable wickedness, and unrelieved misery, if notwithstanding the united work of three infinite agents, there was still to be a bottomless pit and an everlasting smoke of torment, a black and boundless ocean of guilt

and pain, swelled by gloomy streams ever and ever flowing in from earth, for which infants were sealed in their birth, to which the lost are consigned in their death—if this be the lot to which the great mass of our species is destined—of which the first tear is a symbol, and the last sigh a passport, —if hell still is more peopled than heaven, then the infinite agencies of redemption might have been spared, this hopeless and illimitable anguish might have been extinguished, and the annihilation of our first parents would have been the greater mercy and the greater salvation.

Appeal is made to scripture with still greater confidence than to experience. There is one to whom reference is never made for testimony to this doctrine, and that is our Lord Jesus Christ; and if such doctrine were true, it is strange that he who needeth not that any should testify of man, because he knew what was in man, did not reveal it, and stamp it with all the solemnity of his authority. It may with confidence be asserted that such a dogma as the inherent and universal corruption of human nature is neither asserted nor justified by any Scripture from Genesis to Revelations. The Bible, I admit to be a moral, and also a providential history; and in this relation, I admit also, that it contains many strong statements of human wickedness; but they all refer to periods of peculiar degeneracy, and a fair study of the context will plainly show they have defined limitations. In the appendix to this lecture I will subjoin a list of texts usually pleaded for this doctrine, the mere exhibition of which is sufficient to expose its utter want of a Scriptural foundation.* On the present occasion I shall confine my remarks to the proofs alleged from Paul to the Romans. Stripping the subject of all the mysticism with which it has been encumbered, and identifying ourselves with the mind and times of the apostle, let us clearly see what was his object, and then we shall truly apprehend the nature of his argument. Paul's object was twofold: first, to show that the Gospel was

* See Appendix, Note 1.

universal. This was opposed to the circumscribed nationality of Judaism. Secondly, that it was inward and spiritual. This was again opposed to the ritual and legal exactitude of Judaism. The General course, therefore, of the argument is directed against Jewish thoughts and Jewish prejudices, and to maintain the admissibility of the Gentiles to the Christian church. He has then to make good two propositions:—namely, "that God is impartially and equally the God of all men; and that fidelity of heart is the essence of all true religion. We might sum up the whole system of the Apostle in two simple sentences of his letter: "Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also." The other assertion is, that "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Proving these two principles, he utterly demolishes all Jewish claims. The Apostle proceeds to open the new aspect which Jesus presented of the character of God—that of grace or mercy. Moses proclaimed Jehovah as a God of law, Jesus revealed him as a God of grace. Paul cautiously, but with power, argues most convincingly that in this relation only can men confidently approach him, but in this relation there is free access for all. None have a claim from merit, for all are guilty. With remarkable prudence, he takes, first, the case of the Gentile, and the state of the world in his own time supplied him examples in melancholy abundance. There was, therefore, no ground for Gentile exultation or Jewish jealousy, for the gospel was offered to the Heathens, not as a thing of merit but of favour, not as reward for their holiness, but as a remedy for their sin. To the Jews, who looked with bitter contempt on all men but themselves, who imagined every spiritual advantage was for them alone, this would be most offensive. The next question which thence arose was this:—As the Gentiles obviously were accepted before God, only on the ground of his mercy, whether the Jews could claim acceptance on any other ground? The Apostle had most con-

vincingly shown that the Gentiles had violated the sense of duty inscribed upon their hearts, with equal force of reasoning he proves that the Jews had violated the precepts written in their law; one, therefore, had no right to accuse the other—both were guilty in the sight of God, and both had equal need of his mercy.—But, the Jews were not only wrong in their ideas on the extent of the Creator's goodness, but also on the true nature of human virtue. As they considered his special providence confined to themselves, so they imagined the only acceptable obedience was in the rigid observance of their own minute precepts and ceremonies. In opposition to this Paul contends that justification is by faith, and not by the works of the law—not a faith which implies a mere assent to a series of scholastic propositions, but a faith which consists in a trusting and confiding spirit. The Apostle places saving holiness, not in outward and measured precepts, but in living and inward principles—in allegiance to God and Christ, in the loyalty of a true and pure heart—in the spirit that makes obedience more a life than a law. To say then that God holds man sternly to a code of inevitable condemnation, to say that any one transgression, however slight, sets at naught the whole tendency of the character and life, not only leaves Paul's reasoning without force, but subverts the gospel to its very foundations. Our Lord in the parable represents a master as thus addressing his unforgiving servant, "O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt because thou desiredst me—shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?" The character of God as described by orthodoxy is the contradictory of this. But we are informed that God is a Judge, and, analogous to human judges, on the tribunal of the universe, lays aside all private considerations. The assimilation is at once low and false. God has no evidence to examine, no probabilities to balance, no decision to arrive at, no formal sentence to pronounce—there is no distinction in the

case between God and man, analogous to that between an earthly judge, and his accused fellow-mortal; there is no such distinction with God as a personal relation and a public one, for God is the same in all relations. His dominion is in the spirit; there he rewards, and there he punishes; there is no reward separate from the direct results of righteousness itself issuing in blessedness, and no penalty separate from the results of sin itself issuing suffering, and each in the proportion in which the character is sanctified or depraved. Forgiveness of sin then, is peace of conscience, springing from a regenerated heart, and when man with a thoughtful and enlightened spirit can forgive himself, God forgives him. We, at least those of us personally engaged in this controversy, maintain no such doctrine as the pardon of sin on condition of repentance—as if repentance were something offered and remission an equivalent received instead. On the contrary, we see in repentance but the painful revulsion of a soul from a moral state found by sad experience to be unworthy of it: a struggle upward in many sighs and fears to the high estate from which it has fallen, in repentance itself we see but an additional instance of the anguish which sin never fails to entail. We regard it not as a merit, but a penalty. We grant the universality of sin, as fully as any can assert it. We know it is written, "all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God"—and we admit the truth of the assertion. Wherever man is, there will be sin, for we expect in no place—no, not in heaven itself—to find in man the perfection of a deity. It has been asserted, that every man has an ideal in his soul above his actual conduct. This has been used for condemnation of our nature, we take it as the glory of it—as an evidence that the spirit of God is extinguished in no man. We are ready to concede, not that the open transgressor comes short of the glory of God, but the best men come far short of the glory of their own ideal, and the sense of that short coming is acute, in the degree

that their apprehensions of moral loveliness are clear and purified. Every man with his conscience in a right state laments with more heart-felt sorrow the sins which are inward than those which are outward, not those which have been exposed to the world, but those which only God has seen. We desire in no sense to mitigate the deep injury of sinfulness; but when we are told, that God, in vindication of his holy law, must subject man to an unsparing standard of judgment, orthodoxy to be consistent should have the unmitigated penalty inflicted on every personal transgressor. We are unable to conceive how the righteousness of any law can be vindicated by contriving an escape for the guilty by the suffering of the innocent. We do not make void the law—nay, we establish it, for we hold, and we preach it also, that transgression vindicates in the person of the sinner the claims of holiness, righteously and completely, in anguish and tribulation. I hear close the polemical division of this lecture, and now for the remaining time I shall dwell on views more positive.

II. Having elucidated two extreme and false systems of human nature, I shall now adduce some of these essentials which properly entitle it to be considered in the likeness of God. I shall pass over the faculties of mere intellect and taste, for these are not denied. I do this for the sake of brevity, for it would be easy to prove that without sense of moral beauty in the soul, even these could have no high developement, philosophy would lose its wisdom, science its uses, painting its glow, architecture its majesty, sculpture its grace, poetry and eloquence their inspiration. It would be easy, I maintain, to show, that without conceptions of the divine, the true, the right, and the beautiful, there would be neither power nor materials in human nature from which to create a single great work of mind, nothing to evince the might of genius or the immortality of thought. I shall, however, in all my subsequent remarks, confine myself to

what without dispute is strictly moral. We contend not for an infallibility in man's reason, neither do we assert impeccability in his will; as we admit error in the one, we can admit sin in the other. But when we speak of the moral nature of man, we regard it not partially, but as a whole, not in its accidental exceptions, but in its essential constitution. Of this constitution we assert that virtue and goodness are the true and native attributes. For the position that sin is not natural but unnatural, not in accordance with humanity but contrary to it, we have the testimony of the great bishop Butler.*—"Every work," he says, "of nature and art is a system; and as every particular thing, both natural and artificial, is for some use or purpose, out of or beyond itself, one may add to what has already been brought into the true idea of a system, its conduciveness to this or more ends. Let us instance in a watch: Suppose the several parts taken to pieces and placed apart from each other; let a man have ever so exact a notion of these several parts, unless he considers the respect and relations which they have to each other, he will not have any thing like the idea of a watch. Suppose these several parts brought together, and any how united, neither will he yet, be the union ever so close, have an idea which will bear any resemblance to that of a watch. But let him view these several parts put together, or consider them as to be put together in the manner of a watch—let him form a notion of the relation which these several parts have to each other, all conducive in their several ways to this purpose, showing the hour of the day,—and then he has the idea of a watch. Thus it is with the inward nature of man. Appetites, passions, affections, and the principle of reflection, conscience, considered severally as the inward parts of our inward nature, do not at all give us an idea of the system of this nature. And this our nature is adapted to virtue, as from the idea of a watch it ap-

* Pref. to Sermons.

pears, that its nature, that is, constitution or system, is adapted to measure time. What in fact commonly happens is nothing to the question. Every work of art is apt to be out of order: but this is so far from being according to its system, that let the disorder increase, and it will destroy it." The author then goes on to say, that—"Nothing can possibly be more contrary to our nature than vice, meaning by nature not only the several parts of our internal frame, but the constitution of it. Poverty and disgrace, tortures death, are not so contrary to it. Misery and injustice indeed equally contrary to some different parts of our nature taken singly, but injustice is moreover contrary to the whole constitution of the nature." And here I will repeat a single remark from the same noble thinker, used already, in a note by one of my fellow-labourers in this discussion.—"We should learn," says the philosophical prelate, "to be cautious lest we charge God foolishly, by ascribing that to human, or the nature he has given us, which is wholly owing to human abuse. Men may speak of the degeneracy and corruption of the world, according to the experience they have had of it, but human nature considered as the divine workmanship should, methinks, be treated as sacred: for in the image of God made he man." *

In human nature, under all its forms, we recognize two eternal moral elements; which, though frequently perverted, can never be destroyed. I mean sympathy and conscience, the feeling of a common nature, and the sense of right and wrong. If we consider the truth, the power, and extent of sympathy, though nothing else remained in man, this alone would prove his assimilation to God; would prove, to use the language of the Apostle, that he was still a partaker of the divine nature. In what numberless forms is it manifested!—rising from instinct to godliness. We see it in family affections. Wherever we meet a home, however rude

* See Note 2.

the beings that it shelters, whether it be scooped in the snow, or be a tent on the desert, wherever the loves of parents and children, of brothers and sisters, are interchanged within the sphere of its operation, we have the spirit of a common heart. We see it also in love of country. From those who surround him in his dwelling, man enlarges the compass of his affections, until they embrace those who, with himself, tread the same soil, and speak the same tongue. The general glory, honour, and prosperity of his country, become dear to him; and from habits of loving association, there, more than any where else, the heavens have a brighter smile, and nature wears a kinder face. Every nation has had its patriots; and, whether successful or not, whether victorious in the field or bleeding on the scaffold, they evince the power with which the sentiment of common good can overcome the force of selfish interests. We see the strength of sympathy in the love of man generally, and especially in that species of it which assumes the form of compassion. Whence else the mass of goodness which proves that humanity, with all its evils and its errors, is a most merciful nature. Misery, in any form, is an appeal that is rarely disregarded. The stranger, whose face we never saw before, if it be seamed and marred by suffering, in his misfortune becomes a brother; and what is yet harder, our foe, in his sorrow, seems once more a friend. Men find it hard to pardon a prosperous enemy; but there are few so callous whom a fallen one would not disarm of hatred. Hunger, thirst, cold, nakedness, desertion, orphanage, imprisonment, sickness—every want that afflict the wretched—have their provision in human mercy, not only from individual hands, but from collective hearts. When man is maligned as utterly corrupt—as at enmity with God and his kind, we may point to thousands occupied in works of beneficence, and to refugees for misery in every land, and claim as witnesses against the accusers. And we stop not with the woes that fall directly

under the senses;—sufferers who wasted their sighs and their tears in darkness, have been thought of with grief by those whom they knew not, and visited with glad tidings when they least expected. The piercing supplication of wretchedness has been sometimes wafted across continents and oceans without failing, or being weakened by the distance; and the cry of anguish, uttered at one extreme of earth, has fallen with power on human hearts at the other. We speak not of bodily wants alone, but equally of the soul's wants. The ignorant have those who feel and work for them, and there are some who do not scorn the most guilty; there are many pure souls who never themselves knew contamination, who can turn with mercy to the despised, and bleed with sorsow that the work of God should lie so deep in ruin. And, whether with right or wrong principles, whether by right or wrong agencies, whether in right or wrong methods, this sentiment can have no illustration so sublime as the various exertions here, and throughout the globe, for the religious regeneration of mankind. Is there, then, nothing godlike in the spirit which gives unity and love to home; nothing godlike in the spirit which, with unselfish devotion, causes a man to sacrifice his own interests in his nation's good; nothing godlike in the spirit which makes the sufferer a brother, whether stranger or enemy; which can pierce the haunts of loathsome want; which can feel for the body and the soul, and draw near, in generous pity, both to distress and crime; which dreams, with tortured imagination, of the unseen tribulation of the dungeon, and rests not until the fresh breeze is on the prisoner's brow, and the bright and cheerful sunshine on his eye; which stretches forth its ample charity to the utmost regions of earth; and, wherever there is a complaint of physical or spiritual need, admits it is a brother's cry, and hears it not in vain?

The very passions, which might seemingly be urged against this reasoning, are but so many confirmations of it. Men have sometimes tried to be independent of others; they

failed. Men have tried to live apart from others, and to dispense with the general affections of life; they failed. Men have tried to set opinion at defiance, and to disregard esteem; they also failed. And, in the few rare and extreme cases in which men have been more than usually sordid, selfish, and anti-social, the isolation to which they have been abandoned evinced their conduct to be averse to nature; and, whilst it proved their folly, inflicted their chastisement. Emulation, envy, jealousy, vanity, ambition, and various other passions, afford evidence to the same purpose: for, what is emulation, but the struggle for the greatest share of appreciation; and envy, but the malignity of disappointment; and jealousy, but the suspicion of not possessing it,—perchance, of not deserving it; and vanity, but the puny desire to attain, or the timid hope that it already has it; and ambition, but the strong effort of a strong nature to have a lasting life in the admiration and memory of men: all, in their several ways, converging in evidence of one truth, namely, that community of feeling is amongst the greatest distinctions of our nature. In truth, it is only by this that man understands man. It is this that opens to man the heart of man; that, from the first human being to the last, forms a chain of common emotion, which indissolubly links mankind of all generations into one brotherhood. Without this, history would be a dead letter; laws and customs, but puzzles; arts, confused and shapeless; past languages and literature, but empty babble; and by-gone religions and philosophy, but unintelligible names. This common sympathy is that by which we know the meaning of history; by which we know the force of laws and customs; by which we know the beauty and immortality of art; by which we are enabled to interpret language, literature, philosophy, and religion; by which we are made one with our race, and identified in kindred with all that have ever ennobled or adorned it.

A second characteristic I have mentioned, in man, is the *sense of duty*, the sense of right and wrong. In this more

than in any other quality he bears the impress of his divine original. The sense of duty is an essential part of human nature. A man might as well endeavour to lay aside the consciousness of his rational existence as to get rid of the idea of an immoveable distinction between good and evil, between virtue and vice. I know that, in the operations of the moral sense, there have been apparent contradictions; but if we were to deny it on this ground, we should deny the existence even of reason itself, for many of its conclusions are apparently contradictory. We assert the reality of the rational faculty, but not its infallibility; in like manner, we assert the reality of the moral faculty, but not its infallibility. I know that it seems various in its operation, not only from national and religious differences, but also from individual sophistries. Men pronounce just judgment on the sins of others; but when they come to pass sentence on their own, they invent a thousand excuses for justification or leniency: but these excuses do not satisfy themselves. And when they are alone with their own hearts, in silent and sober thought, the deception will not bear to be scrutinized, and truth is justified by conscience. The sense of duty is universal. Wherever we meet man, we meet one who, in some way or other, is the creature of moral feeling; and although the moral sentiment may be superstitiously or fanatically directed, there are essential ideas in which it never changes. Wild actions and awful evils may, I know, be perpetrated under a mistaken sense of duty, and done with the fiercer zeal because they are considered to be duty. Under its influence, men can not only sacrifice others but themselves: in one age or country, a man can lacerate himself before an image or an idol, or look calmly on the rack on which a tortured fellow creature shivers, or he can come from his retreat of self-infliction to the place where he persecutes; and, if the case compelled, he could go himself from that to the stake of martyrdom. The sentiment is true to itself, and the misdi-

rection of it lies in other sources: yet with all its diversities, justice, mercy, and truth, have ever the instinctive approval of conscience, whilst wrong, cruelty, and falsehood, under whatever forms disguised, are abhorrent to it. The sense of duty presents man to us in the most glorious aspects of his nature; and that sentiment is not always misdirected. By its power in the soul, we observe appetites governed, passions subjected, and temptation overcome; by its inspiration, when necessity calls, we observe men devoting themselves in the spirit of martyrdom to truth and right, casting pleasure aside, forsaking whatever was dear to them, and despising life itself. Whatever change for good has occurred in the history of man, is a witness for the force of duty, for it has been worked out in much travail and self-denial; whatever we have most precious in our spiritual or social blessings, whether our liberties or our religion, we owe to the spirit of duty; it is enshrined in the memory of all our benefactors; it is consecrated in the blood of martyrs. Signal instances of this kind may strike more forcibly from their distinctness and saliency; but the mightiest energy of duty is in the economy of general life. Go into the open mart of the world, and, in all the astonishing complexities that are spread over that wide scene, consider to what an extent man trusts man, and is trusted in return, mutual confidence forming the immutable foundation of the vast social structure. It is base injustice to human nature to assert that all this is the effect of interest or fear; without pervading conscience, mere interest or fear would be as powerless to sustain society as the arm of man to move the orbs of heaven; without conscience, human laws could either have no existence or no power,—mere ropes of sand, that a touch could sever; passion would have no scruple, desire no limit, but power; and selfishness no control, but a superior opposing force: the strong would prostrate the weak by violence, and the weak would in turn overreach the strong by guile, deceit, and fraud.

I am willing to admit, as I have before admitted, that social man is encompassed with many injurious influences, and I know that he does not always escape guiltless: I know that many vices are generated in society, and nourished by its corruptions; that pride, both worldly and religious, walks through life with anti-social heart and clouded brow, wrapped up in its own miserable importance, exulting in vanities, self-worshipping and self-enslaved; that covetousness, surfeited with acquisition, still works on, and still cries "more;" that licentiousness goes its way in darkness, and leaves destruction in its path; that envy broods over its own solitary and unacknowledged malice, sickens at the pleasure or the fame it cannot reach; that gospel charity is often slain in the collision of creeds and passions, and Christian zeal heated into bigotry; but these, I repeat again, are not our nature, and judgment against it on such grounds is quite as unjust, as if we should seek out the hospitals to test the health of a community, visit but prisons to decide on its morals, and pass only through asylums for lunatics to form an opinion of its intelligence. But even in its sins, humanity loses not the evidence of its divine relationship. The image of God may be darkened, but the impress is deep as ever. The capacity of sin equally implies the capacity of holiness; transgression implies the knowledge of a law, inspired or revealed; the violation, therefore, of moral injunctions includes the high capability of moral perception. Whence but from the greatness of our nature is the deep misery of sin—whence, I might say, but from its holiness?—whence but from its adaptation to goodness, are the ruin and the dislocation which guilt can work in our whole inward frame and constitution? Thence it is, that it is that the conscience, dethroned and humiliated, is torn by remorse, worse incomparably than bodily torture: thence it is, that the affections either become a total and disorganized wreck, or, wounded by a sense of shame and lost dignity, bow down with sorrow

or wither in despair. Thence it is, that the good and pure are shunned, and the evil sought, for the one cause a feeling of contrast too painful to be borne, the other afford a refuge by their moral assimilation, and the spirit needs support wherever it can be found. Thence it is, that when the guilty have utterly lost their own respect, and the approbation of the virtuous, that crime becomes desperation and remorse madness,—that conscience is silenced in delirious self-defence, and that plunge after plunge sinks them lower and lower in the gulf of spiritual perdition. And yet human character is rarely ever such a wreck as not to have some remnant to justify its origin and parentage; some embers of the sacred fire smouldering in the sanctuary,—some gleams of affection,—some dawnings of memory, that open to the weary spirit the quiet and happiness of better days,—some touches of mercy that has yet a sigh for wretchedness,—some visitings of compunction,—some unconscious desires to be good once more,—some timid hopes of pardon,—some secret prayers to be made better. The human soul is a great mystery, and so indeed is human life; we observe a few palpable and external manifestations, but how little know we of the secret and unseen workings! That the good in every human being, even such as strikes us as the worst, preponderates over the evil, is, I am persuaded, not the imagination of a fanciful charity, but a fact and a reality.

But though more crime existed in actual life than has ever been alleged, our doctrine would yet be true. We enter on no defence of man in the whole of his conduct. We contend for his inherent capacities, and in arguing for these, we are entitled to select our illustrations from the highest specimens of nature, and not from the lowest. We contend for its capacity to subjugate passion to principle—to sacrifice present desires to progressive good—to resign selfish interests to human ones—to give the spiritual and eternal a predominance over the sensual and the temporal: and we con-

tend for this, not as a thing possible, but a thing proved: we contend for what has its evidence in abundance of examples. If we could point to one patriot, to one philanthropist, to one martyr, to one holy man, in each of these the fact would have sufficient attestation: but humanity has its armies of patriots, and philanthropists, and martyrs, and saints. With these the lowest of us are united in a kindred nature, and dignified by a common brotherhood. But passing from characters of this magnitude, come we to the ordinary existence that is common to us all. Every life, from the palace to the cottage, is one more or less of self-denial and labour—one in which we must continually defer to others and work for them. Cast your imagination over the vast throng of this busy world: consider the countless modes in which they are all toiling with head and hand, from the man of genius to the labourer of field or factory,—from the proudest merchant to his meanest servant,—scarcely a movement in it all that has not a reference to others beyond the agent,—scarcely a movement that has not some connection with a human love or a human duty. Retire from the crowd to their dwellings, and, except in cases of last degradation, they are, on the whole, retreats of mutual kindness. If there be grief, there is compassion,—if there be illness, there is unwearied tenderness,—if there be death, there is sorrow. It will perhaps be said, that all this may very well consist with a reprobate state. If so, it only proves that no state is so reprobate, as not to be consistent with a great mass of excellence. If to confer happiness and show mercy be not goodness, we are at a loss to explain the goodness of God or of Christ. And as we descend in the scale of society, we discover human nature with peculiar trials, and also with peculiar virtues. Amongst the poor and laborious classes we may find some grossness, but we find much goodness; and to a considerate mind the wonder will be, that their grossness is not more, and their goodness less. We behold them often patient under

manifold oppressions, forbearing against many wrongs; uncomplaining in the midst of afflictions, toiling on from youth to age in the same routine of laborious monotony; resigned in illness, though it takes that strength from them which is their only refuge, merciful to each other, giving aid to want out of want; all divine evidence that there is in humanity a godlike spirit, which nothing can suppress, not sin, ignorance, poverty, nor any ill of life.

I have spoken of our divine affinity chiefly in the goodness that unites us to our species, but there is a tendency towards God himself in which that affinity is still more clearly seen. It is made manifest in our capacity to know God. God is a spirit, and must be spiritually apprehended. We must therefore have some attributes in common. If there be not some qualities in our souls corresponding to the nature of God, he would be to us a nonentity, and we could neither know him nor love him. The knowledge of God is a spiritual revelation, and by that which is within us we interpret the revelation and give to it a meaning—his power in the movement of our will—his intelligence in the rectitude of our reason—his goodness in the sympathies of our affections—his holiness in the law of our conscience. It is made manifest in our capacity to imitate God. The apostle says, "Be ye followers of God as dear children;" and our Saviour himself exhorts us to "be merciful even as he is merciful," and to be "perfect even as he is perfect." To imitate any being with whom we had no assimilation of nature, it requires no argument to prove an utter impossibility. But this principle has a moral value far beyond its theological import—in breaking down the distance which we usually place between our hearts and God; in drawing him within the circle of our nearest affections; in uniting us to him in a more filial trust, in taking fear from our love and inspiring life in our obedience—proving to us that God is verily and indeed our Father, as Christ is our brother; that God our Father is imitable by his children;

that Christ our brother by a perfect conformity to his will has revealed and proved its truth. That we have affinity with God is further made manifest by our need of him. Consciously or unconsciously every man is seeking after God, or after what God alone can give him. Whether blindly or otherwise, we all feel the want of him in our souls, for in whatever direction we turn our desires, we are yearning after the perfect and the infinite: we have the proof of it in our disgust, our dissatisfactions, and discontents. Who does not hear of the insufficiency of the world? And what does that mean? The vanity of pleasure. But why is pleasure vain? why does he who tries it in all its enchantments, weary at last even to repugnance? The vexations of wealth? But why are riches vexatious? Why do they disappoint the hope that longed so deeply for them, and leave complaints still in all the fullness of success? The fatigues of power? But, why again is power fatiguing, when no sacrifices were too painful, and no toils too harrassing in the career for its attainment? It is simply because pleasure, wealth, or power, can never fully occupy the human soul, unlimited in capacity and desire, perishable things bring it only chagrin, when in lavish expectation it looks for complete fruition. Nor is it alone that we call the world, which proves insufficient, but still higher, the pursuits of knowledge, and the creations of genius; the greatest sage feels himself at last a child, and the most inspired poet wishes for things more beautiful than he has ever conceived, and scenes brighter than he has ever imagined. Even in truest religion this sentiment may be discerned in operation, in alternations between fear and faith, between despondency and hope. A longing for the invisible and the boundless may be traced in all the higher forms of superstition—in every effort to overcome the thraldom of the body and to achieve the spiritual emancipation, from the ascetics that in the first centuries peopled the deserts of Asia to the flagellants that in the middle centuries overran the

continent of Europe; from the penitent that scorches himself on an Indian plain, to the monk that lashes himself in a Spanish cloister. Now to what do all these, some true and some mistaken, refer, to what do they point? Evidently to something which the soul cannot find on earth, to God, perfect and infinite, in whom at last it will attain repose and fullness. And thus we have two great truths intimated at the same time; for the conscious want that tells us of our need of God reveals also our immortality, and the one is the glory of the other.

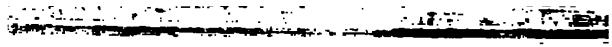
Now, in conclusion, let me ask to what purpose is all this blackening of human nature? It cannot promote humility; for to be humble is not to be degraded. If a sense of degradation corresponded with humility, we should be more humble as we descended to the level of the brutes. It cannot inspire a poignant sense of guilt, nor a true feeling of confession, for as it takes away natural dignity it leaves nothing from which a man can fall; and as it denies personal capacity, it must in the same degree weaken the feeling of personal accountability. He whose moral sorrow will ever lie most profoundly is one that has the consciousness of having abused high and great capacities; of having, by his own sins, become unworthy of his nature; of having done despite to the spirit of God within him, the light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world; of having apostatised from his godlike destiny. But to tell a man, as orthodoxy does, first that he is morally imbecile, and then that he is personally guilty, is an absolute derangement and confusion of all our moral ideas. It is well that essentially the sources of our conduct in general, are beyond the reach of theology; or doctrines like these, would stop all motives to exertion, would destroy the hopes of the good, and strike dead the efforts of the penitent, As it is they are not without great and serious evils. They take from virtue that which is its most noble distinction.

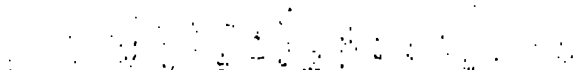
when rightly understood, a sense of individual and independent action:—they attach a slavish spirit to religion, which, to a great extent, stifles the free and voluntary service of the heart. Yet worse still, to maintain an extreme theory, men are driven to malign their nature, and to seek for all manner of blame against it—to deny the excellence and reality of virtues—of which an unsophisticated observer could not entertain a doubt, to invent all motives for goodness but the true ones. It is a sad necessity in which men place themselves when they are compelled to violence to their own hearts, and injustice to those of others, when their system forces them to repress their rising pleasure in the beauty of virtue, and to change their unbidden admiration into qualified condemnation. If the man called heretical, or one called unregenerate, visit the sick, clothe the naked, do in fact every work of mercy, have a heart of love and a hand of bounty—revere his God in all sincerity, and worship him in truth, the evangelical moralist must assert, that it is all worthless, and is, in fact, of the nature of sin. Though one who is called regenerate should do no more, and to all evidence, not in a better spirit, he is esteemed a most godly and pious Christian. The man who cannot believe as the creeds or a party require, may do every work which Christ will judge him by, and be refused his name; but if he has the blessing of his master in heaven, he may care little for the anathema of men upon earth. If Unitarianism delivered us from nothing else than this spiritual injustice, it is a great redemption.

If I am asked, in turn, why I maintain the doctrine of human dignity, I answer, first, because it raises my homage to God. I understand him no otherwise than as he is emblemed in the human soul, exalted and purified: without this creation is a blank to me, and the scripture a dead letter. Regarding it also as his work, I revere him through his work, the more profoundly, the more I believe it worthy of him.

I cannot conceive it an honour to God, that the only being here who has capacity to know him, the only being who reflects his attributes, the only being who admires his universe and discerns him in it, should be wholly corrupt: I cannot think that such a doctrine gives him glory. I answer secondly—because it teaches me to hope for man; teaches me to hope for him in this world and the next: while I have faith in the capacity, I can never lose hope in the developement, but if man be powerless as well as depressed, I have no proper ground for expectation, and the difficulties of the present are softened by no light from the future. But as it is, believing that man has great inherent capabilities, for knowledge, for liberty, for virtue, and for happiness—I lose not my confidence, I observe him as in the struggle of discipline, and in preparation for the period of redemption; and wherever I see ignorance, or slavery, or vice, or misery, I do not despair of a time, when these heavenly faculties shall have achieved their emancipation. I answer, lastly, I maintain the doctrine because it teaches me to honour man. I feel how necessary it is for us in this world of outward show, and where outward show has so much power, that we should have some strong sentiment by which to give our appreciation to those who have no external dazzle with which to attach us: in this world of grades and inequalities, where rank and wealth, and genius, so continually throw their enchantments about us, we need a sentiment before which rank and wealth and genius are nothing, in regarding those who have them not, and also those who have: and no sentiment can be more powerful, more holy, or more sublime than this, that they are the immortal children of God, destined for his presence, and made after his likeness. Having this faith, then, ignorance, sin, poverty, may come safely before us, without any fear of that infidel contempt with which tney are too often treated. Show me then a man, and no matter *what* his condition, if I be true to this faith, you point me

to an object of most solemn interest. Show me the red man of the American forests, or the black man of tropical deserts, and untame and ferocious though he be, he has within him an indelible title to my reverence. His rude and unclothed form enshrines a soul in the image of God, as well as the most polished of his civilized brethren. Show me the veriest serf or slave who seems chained to the soil—the gospel which is equal to bond and free, tells me to behold in him the heir of a glorious inheritance; his title is his nature; it burns in his blood, and it is stamped upon his brow, its appeal is in the fire or moisture of his eye—no power can efface it, for the hand of God has impressed it:—show me even the criminal who seems all but lost to every sense of duty, I am not justified in despairing, much less have I any title to scorn. We dare not despise in the lowest state the child whom God regards—we dare not cast off whom Christ has not rejected, nor disown the brother for whom he died. If we be right-minded, and have any sympathy with the spirit of Jesus, his moral wretchedness should be his most eloquent appeal. We never know the whole power of Christianity until we have interest in man as the child of God, and revere him as God's image, until we behold the throng around us in relation to their mighty and improvable capacities—until we see in the lowest and the worst, objects of hope and moral influence, with undying souls which no vice or passion should conceal. In this faith the messenger of God may go with confidence to guilt and suffering, and bring with him no mocking offers of blessedness and peace: then may he call on souls to rejoice which were ready to perish in despair, pour the dews of heaven on many a closing hour, and silence the doubts of many a fearing spirit. Thus, believing we should have trust unshaken, look forward to the consummation, when that humanity which here has only its trials, shall be hallowed with the infinity and eternity of its maker.





NOTES.

Note 1. See page 13.

HAVING in the Appendix of my former lecture stated from sources of authority the doctrines of Calvinism on the nature of man, I here enumerate some of the principal texts on which those doctrines are said to be founded. The question, it is to be kept in mind, is not whether man is or is not capable of great depravity, whether sin of various degrees and extent has not existed in all ages, and does not exist at present in all places. That sin has entered into the world is a fact undisputed, no matter when or how; that sin is universal is a point also, upon which we are on both sides agreed. The true subject of dispute between us is, simply, this. Is human nature a nature of radical and inherent depravity? or is not goodness more properly its characteristic than evil? Now we maintain that all its essential tendencies establish the latter question in the affirmative, and no Scriptures prove the former. I shall take those quoted in the most approved Calvinistic formularies.

Gen. iii. is alleged as giving an account of the origin of sin: "And the Lord said to the woman, what is this thou hast done? And the woman said, the serpent beguiled me and I did eat." There we have the account of Adam's temptation and transgression, with the penalties pronounced upon the beguiler and his dupes. Now in whatever light we regard this passage, whether as a mythos, an allegory, or a literal narrative, it implies nothing of the doctrine asserted, or the consequences attributed to it; namely, the loss of all original righteousness, and entire defilement in all the faculties and parts of the soul and body: the imputation of their sin to mankind, burdened with the penalty of eternal death. When we find these ideas extracted out of one obscure passage, we may well ask is it Unitarianism or orthodoxy which adds to the Scriptures? These ideas are not

in the passage itself, nor in any other supposed to be co-relative, nor in any number of passages fairly conjoined and fairly interpreted.

Gen. vi. 5. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth." This states merely a general fact, that of an evil condition of society, for which judgment of God is represented as poured out from heaven. But it is alleged, that in the same connection we read "that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually." This clause only expresses the original idea with more impressive force. No one in the worst state of an individual or a nation will attempt to maintain that such words can have a rigid and literal application. Besides, in that very time, Noah is made an express exception; for we read that "the Lord said unto Noah, come thou and all thy house into the ark, for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation."* But though the literal meaning were insisted on, it could but literally extend to men of that time; and the rule of interpretation by which our opponents define the character of man, we are entitled in the next verse to apply to the character of God. "It *repented* him," we are told, "that he had made man on the earth, and it *grieved* him at his heart."† If on the literal principle we are to conclude man wicked in every thought and imagination, on the same principle we are to conclude that God can repent, and that he can be grieved at the heart.

Jer. xvii. 9. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," is an exaggeration of the same kind with that we are considering. It was uttered when the Jewish nation was in a state of sad corruption, and the prophet's feelings were passionate against his countrymen in grief and indignation. If we are to take all the prophet's words as coolly and deliberately uttered, then what shall we say to the tremendous language in which he curses his existence and his birth.

Eccl. vii. 29. "God hath made man upright, but they have sought many inventions." This expression contains no matter of controversy; the first part states our view, and the latter clause of the verse, by no torture of criticism can be made to imply inherent and entire depravity.

Psalm li. 5. "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." The import of this expression is to be judged of from the general tone of the Psalm, which is most passionate and penetential, inspired by the deepest spirit of remorse. David uttered these complainings in profoundest self-accusation; but there would

* Gen. vii. 1. † Gen. vi. 6.

be little for repentance to deplore, if he could remove the blame from himself to his nature, and bury individual guilt in a corruption to which he was subjected in common with all men. The force and meaning—the piercing and eloquent deprecation of the whole composition, combine to show it is one of individual experience, the idea of original sin leaves it vapid and pointless, makes it, not the anguish of a convicted sinner, but the sophistry of a deluded hypocrite; not a lamentation for vice, but an excuse for it. These passages are the few which can be found in the Old Testament that have any direct reference to a tenet said to be inculcated throughout the whole of Scripture. If we turn to the New Testament we find the evidence quite as scanty, and quite as inconclusive. The texts advanced are commonly taken from the epistles, principally from those of Paul, and of Paul's, mostly from the Romans. Few or none can be advanced from the gospel histories, and the discourses of Christ have no reference to such a doctrine.

Rom. iii. 10. "There is none righteous, no not one: there is none that understandeth," &c., &c. Correspondent to this passage is the 14th Psalm. Both David and Paul refer to the peculiar depravity of their times. But, in the sense of absolute and guiltless perfection, unquestionably, the general assertion may be made of all men.

Rom. v. 12—19, and 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22, 45, 49. The apostle, I apprehend, institutes a comparison between the imperfect man, symbolized in Adam, and the perfect man revealed in Christ; between the earthly and the heavenly, the mortal and the immortal; death shown forth in the one—life manifested in the other.

Rom. vii. 18. "For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not." Ver. 25. "So then with my mind, I serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin." And the apostle had said in the preceding verses, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." This is an eloquent and fervent out-pouring of individual experience, no more intended as a universal description than any passage in the journal of John Wesley or Thomas Scott. Involving as human nature does, a twofold constitution, a struggle between desire and conscience is a necessary condition of its moral existence. This is inevitable, unless a being is

above or beneath temptation; but the very struggle implies the power of the moral sense; the possession of the moral sense is an element of human dignity even in defeat, how much more in triumph. Without the power of transgression or the danger of falling, there is of course no trial, and in the human sense no virtue. But there are some expressions of Paul's more general and comprehensive, and to these I shall devote one or two remarks.

Rom. viii. 7. "The carnal mind (τὸ φρονημα τῆς σαρκος—the mind of the flesh) is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

Gal. v. 17. "For the flesh lusteth against the spirit,(Ἡ γὰρ σὰρξ ἐπιθυμεῖ κατα του πνευματος) and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other." The scriptural use of the word "flesh" (σαρξ) implies two meanings; first, the excess of the inferior desires, which is in reality contrary to God, and therefore sin; for God, though he has implanted these subordinate desires, has subjected them to certain laws, beyond which they are at variance with his will and with his providence. In this view the carnal mind is properly at enmity with God, and is not subject to the law of God. Secondly, the inferior desires, parenthetically not actually sin, but in general the causes of sin. When St. Paul says money is the root of all evil, we do not surely understand him to mean that the pursuit of gain is in all cases a root of wickedness; for we may conceive innumerable instances in which the struggle for money is connected with the sublimest of virtues. We merely conclude that it is a very dangerous desire, and liable to very dangerous abuses. Under the designation, therefore, of earthly or fleshly, may be classed three orders of desire—that of gain, that of pleasure, and that of power. These are essentially evil in themselves or they are not. If we conclude they are, we must then charge the fault on God who has given them, or we must become Manachees, and suppose the existence of two principles, one good, and the other evil; if they are not, the sin is in their abuse, and not in their existence, and though the criminal be condemned the nature is absolved. I shall mention but a very few more texts advanced in favour of this doctrine.

Eph. ii. 1—3. "And you hath he quickened," &c. A mere description this, of the age, answerable both to Jews and Gentiles: and to the same purpose is the passage from the same epistle, (c. ix. v. 18.) "having the understanding darkened—being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because

of the blindness of their hearts." Such is the scriptural evidence for one of the most appalling and destructive doctrines that ever clouded humanity; a doctrine which impugns the best and truest affections, and destroys at one fell stroke the idea of spontaneous virtue,—which is compelled to classify the most beautiful and most base, if devoid of certain doctrinal distinctions, under one appellative, —which debases human nature—gives man the vileness of a slave, but does not honour God with the glory of a sovereign. To exhort man to have the perfection of an angel, and to tell him he has the nature of a fiend, to tell him that he is "utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, amidst absurd pranks of theology, is surely the most absurd. And between believing this, or rejecting it, the only alternative left us, is to be at one side or the other of the gulf which separated Lazarus from Abraham.

See Drummond's excellent Essay on Original Sin, and a very admirable tract on the same subject, by the late Dr. Cogan, entitled "A Layman's Letters to Mr. Wilberforce."

Note 2. See page 19.

THERE is no writer in modern times to whom we owe so much for a true and elevated Philosophy on Human nature as to Bishop Butler, the most profound and accurate analyst of the moral faculties of man that has ever illustrated the principles of Christian ethics. He was not a man to take wholesale assertions; he subjected our moral nature to the exact and rigid test of philosophical anatomy, and one deliberate sentence of his, is worth ten thousand disquisitions from traditional theologians, who, parrot-like, repeat and repeat again the jargon, that has grown as stale from mouth to mouth, as the starling's "let me out, let me out"—many of whom have no other reason than that they have heard it so cried out before them. Bishop Butler has examined human nature, and he has given testimony in its favour—he has vindicated its dignity, and he has by a deep philosophy, which seemed to be little comprehended by those who would debase humanity demonstrated its essential excellence. He has proved by irrefutable arguments, its natural disinterestedness, its goodness, its necessary conformity with truth and virtue. These are to be sure but its general tendencies, with many exceptions—yet, why such a line of argument should be deemed insufficient in moral philosophy, and be

admitted as cogent in natural theology, it is difficult to conceive.—Take for instance—in the body the case of the eye or the ear: no one questions, that the eye is admirably adapted for seeing, and the ear for hearing; and though the one may grow dim or the other become deaf, it is never asserted that the constitution or nature of each—on the whole—is contradictory to that for which it was intended. There are, it is true, various evil manifestations in human nature; but there are others good—at least, in *seeming*. Cynical Philosophers and Calvinistic Theologians concur in making the evil substantial, and the good factitious. The answer which this profound reasoner gives to the philosophical opponents of human nature will be a sufficient reply to both. "Suppose," he says, "a man of learning to be writing a grave book upon human nature—and to show in several parts of it, that he had an insight into the subject he was considering. Amongst other things the following one would require to be accounted for; the appearance of benevolence or good-will in men towards each other in the instances of natural relation and in others. Cautious of being deceived with outward show, he retires within himself, to see exactly what that is in the mind of man from whence this appearance proceeds; and upon deep reflection asserts the principle in the mind to be only the love of power and delight in the exercise of it. Would not everybody think here was a mistake of one word for another? That the philosoper was contemplating and accounting for some other human actions, some other behaviour of man to man? And could any one be thoroughly satisfied, that what is commonly called benevolence or good-will was really the affection meant, but only by being made to understand that this learned person had a general hypothesis, to which the appearance of good-will could no otherwise be reconciled? That what has this appearance is often nothing but ambition; that delight in superiority—often (suppose always) mixes itself with benevolence, only makes it more specious to call it ambition than hunger of the two; but in reality that passion does no more account for the whole appearances of good-will, than this appetite does. Is there not often the appearance of one man's wishing that good to another, which he knows himself unable to procure him; and rejoicing in it, though procured by a third person? And, can love of power any way possibly come into account for this desire or delight? Is there not often the appearance of men's distinguishing between two or more persons, preferring one before another, to do good to, in cases where the love of power cannot in the

least account for the distinction or preference? For this principle can no otherwise distinguish between objects, than as it is a greater instance and exertion of power to do good to one rather than to another. Again, suppose good-will in the mind of man be nothing but delight in the exercise of power; men might indeed be restrained by distant and accidental considerations, but these restraints being removed, they would have a disposition to, and a delight in mischief as an exercise and proof of power; and this disposition and delight would arise from the same principle in the mind, as a disposition to, and a delight in charity. Thus cruelty as distinct from resentment, would be exactly the same in the mind of man as good-will; that one tends to the happiness, the other to the misery of our fellow-creatures, is, it seems, merely an accidental circumstance, which the mind has not the least regard to. These are absurdities which even men of capacity run into, when they have occasion to belie their nature; and will perversely disclaim that image of God which was originally stamped upon it: the traces of which, however faint, are plainly discernible upon the mind of man." Many passages might be quoted from this great writer in vindication of humanity, but I shall adduce but one other: it is from the same discourse, (The first sermon on Human Nature,) as that I have already extracted—and much to the same purpose. "Mankind," he says, "have ungoverned passions, which they will gratify at any rate, as well to the injury of others as in contradiction to known private interests, but as there is no such thing as self-hatred, so neither is there any such thing as ill-will in one man towards another, emulation or resentment being away: whereas there is plainly benevolence or good-will: there is no such thing as love of injustice, oppression, treachery, ingratitude; but only eager desire after such and such external goods, which, according to a very ancient observation, the most abandoned would choose to obtain by innocent means, if they were as easy and effectual to their end: even emulation and resentment by any who will consider what these passions really are in nature, will be found nothing to the purpose of this objection, and the principles and passions in the mind of man which are distinct both from self-love and benevolence, primarily and most directly lead to right behaviour with regard to others as well as to himself, and only secondarily and accidentally to what is evil. Thus though men to avoid the shame of one villany are often guilty of a greater, yet it is easy to see that the original tendency of shame is to prevent the doing of shameful actions; and its leading men to

conceal such actions when done, is only the consequence of their being done, that is, of the passions not having answered its first end." —(See also the acute and original Essay of Mr. Hazlitt's, on The Principles of Human Actions, in which the leading idea of Butler's Philosophy is rigidly examined and illustrated.)

Pascal vindicates the dignity of Human nature in some of his most beautiful thoughts. Those who are acquainted with the theology of Pascal (and who are not?) will scarcely suspect him of leaning too partially to the brighter side of our nature. I quote a few passages from his writings, as much for the pleasure of copying them, as for the support they afford to my general argument.

" L'homme est si grand," he observes, " que, sa grandeur parait même en ce qu'il se connait misérable. Un arbre ne se connaît pas misérable : il est vrai que c'est être misérable que de se connaître, qu'on misérable ; mais aussi c'est grand que de connaître qu'on est misérable. Ainsi toutes misères prouvent sa grandeur :—ce sont miseres de grand seigneur, miseres d'un roi dépossédé.

" Nous avons si grande idée de l'ame de l'homme que nous ne pouvons souffrir d'en être méprisé, et d' n'être pas dans l'esteme d'une âme : et toute la félicité des hommes consiste dans cette estime.

" Si d'un côté cette fausse gloire que les hommes cherchent est une grande marque de leur misère et de leur bassesse, c'en une aussi de leur excellence ; car quelque possessions qu'il ait sur la terre, de quelque santé et commodité essentielle qu'il jouisse il n'est pas satisfait, s'il n'est pas dans l'estime des hommes. Il estime si grande la raison de l'homme que quelque avantage, qu'il ait dans le monde, il se croit malheureux s'il n'est placé aussi avantegeusement dans la raison de l'homme c'est la plus belle place du monde : rien ne peut le détourner de ce désir, et c'est la qualité la plus ineffacable du cœur de l'homme : jusque-là que ceux que méprisent le plus les hommes, et qui les égalent aux bétes veulent encore en être admirés, et contradisent á eux-mêmes par leur propre sentiment : la nature, qui est plus puisante que toute leur raison, les convainquant plus fortement de la grandeur de l'homme que la raison ne les convainc de sa baissesse."—" L'homme n'est qu'un roseau le plus faible de la nature ; mais c'est un roseau pensant. Il ne faut pas que l'univers entier s'arme pour l'écraser. Une vapeur, une goutte d'eau suffit pour le tuer. Mais quand l'univers l'écraserait, l'homme serait encore plus noble que ce qui le tue, parce qu'il sait qu'il meurt, et l'avantage que

l'univers a sur lui, l'univers n'en sait rien. Ainsi toute notre dignité consiste dans la pensée c'est de la qu'il faut nous relever, non de l'espace et de la durée." "Il est dangereux de trop voir l'homme combien il est égal aux bêtes sans lui montrer sa grandeur. Il est encore dangereux de lui fair trop voir sa grandeur sans sa bassesse. Il est plus dangereux de lui laisser ignorer l'un et l'autre: mais est tres avantegeux de lui representer l'un et l'autre." (Pensées de Pascal.)

I have adduced the testimony of Bishop Butler as to the soundness of our views on human nature: I shall here transcribe a few passages from a writer, in whose language a kindred philosophy becomes most eloquent and inspiring—I mean Doctor Channing.—"I repeat it," he says, "showing the moral power of faith in the divine capacities of man, to resemble our Maker we need not quarrel with our nature or our lot. Our present state, made up as it is, of aids and trials, is worthy of God, and may be used throughout to assimilate us to him. For example: our domestic ties, the relations of neighbourhood and country, the daily interchanges of thoughts and feelings, the daily occasions of kindness, the daily claims of want and suffering, these and other circumstances of our social state, form the best sphere and school for that benevolence which is God's brightest attribute; and we should make a sad exchange by substituting for these natural aids any self-invented artificial means of sanctity. Christianity, our great guide to God, never leads us away from the path of nature, and never wars with the unsophisticated dictates of conscience. We approach our Creator by every right exercise of the powers he gives us. Whenever we invigorate the understanding by honestly and resolutely seeking truth, and by withstanding whatever might warp the judgment; whenever we invigorate the conscience by following it in opposition to the passions; whenever we receive a blessing gratefully, bear a trial patiently, or encounter peril or scorn with moral courage, whenever we perform a disinterested deed; whenever we lift up the heart in true adoration to God; whenever we war against a habit or desire which is strengthening itself against our higher principles; whenever we think, speak or act with moral energy, and devotion to duty, be the occasion ever so humble or familiar; then the divinity is growing within us, and we are ascending towards our Author. The religion thus blends with common life. We thus draw nigh to God without forsaking men. We are thus without parting with our human nature, to clothe our-

selves with the divine." (Discourse at the ordination of the Rev. F. A. Farley.) Honour is due to all men on the ground of the worth and dignity of their nature, and of this the eloquent writer shows Christianity a proof and an illustration. "The whole of this religion is a testimony to the worth of man in the sight of God—to the importance of human nature—to the infinite purposes for which we were framed. God is there set forth as sending, to the succour of his human family, his beloved Son, the bright image and representative of his own perfections; and sending him, not simply to roll away a burden of pain and punishment, (for this, however magnified in systems of theology is not his highest work) but to create man after that divine image which he himself bears, to purify the soul from every stain, to communicate to it new power over evil, and to open before it immortality as its aim and destination—immortality by which we are to understand, not merely a perpetual, but an ever-improving and celestial being. Such are the views of Christianity. And these blessings it proffers, not to a few, not to the educated, not to the eminent, but to all human beings, to the poorest and the most fallen; and we know that through the power of its promises, it has, in not a few instances, raised the fallen to true greatness, and given them in their present virtue and peace, an earnest of the heaven which it unfolds. Such is Christianity. Men viewed in the light of this religion, are beings cared for by God, to whom he has given his Son, on whom he pours forth his spirit; and whom he has created for the highest good in the universe, the participation of his own perfections and happiness. Such is Christianity. Our scepticism in our own nature cannot quench the bright light which religion sheds on the soul and on the prospects of mankind; and just so far as we receive its truth we shall honour all men." (Discourse on "Honour due to All Men.")

"Theologians," remarks a powerful writer, "say, that the very infant comes into the world under the wrath and curse of the Deity. They never learned that by observing the glory of God in the face of Christ. No such withering frown ever sat on his benignant countenance. Think of Christ's wrath with a child! Think of Christ cursing a child! I must read in the Gospel that he did so, before I believe that God does so, and that the Calvinistic doctrine of original sin is true. In the strong horror of the human heart at the monstrous combination of such a person with such an action, I read the condemnation of that gloomiest article of a gloomy creed; and if it be a

foul calumny on Christ, it must, exalted as he was, be a yet fouler calumny on God. I would sooner believe the one than the other. I would sooner imagine some Jesus of Nazareth encountering some fond father and fonder mother, in the first freshness of their parental feelings, as they pass beneath 'the gate of the temple which was called the Beautiful;' less beautiful in the sculptured forms of marble on which its gorgeous architecture rested than in the living human group which were there bearing the babe to the altar to dedicate it to the God of its fathers; and encountering them with that solemn malediction which would sink into their souls and corrode their lives; than I would imagine Omniscience, which witnesses each man's birth, life, and death, to be in all earth's scenes of parental anxiousness and fondness over helpless infancy, the all-pervading presence of an Almighty curse. Yet this is the doctrine into which thousands upon thousands of children are catechised. Why will not parents and teachers lead them, not to Calvin, but to Christ? So should they receive a blessing, even as did those children, notwithstanding that there were not wanting, even then, erring disciples to intercept their approach and forbid their coming. As his blessing was on them, so is that of his and our God. His doctrine, his conduct. 'Their angels,' he says, 'do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven;' they are the peculiar objects of the providential care which, by the number, and swiftness, and power of those supposed winged messengers, was pictorial typified; and again, 'Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come to me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven!'"—*Christ and Christianity*, a series of Sermons, by the Rev. W. J. Fox: which for energy of thought, richness and beauty of imagery, truth of moral analysis and description, force and eloquence of language, may be placed in the very highest class of pulpit oratory, and even in that class be ranged with its rarest specimens. The taint of heresy has robbed them of their due fame, for in those days, without the proper admixture of orthodoxy, logic only beats the air, and eloquence speaks to the deaf adder that will not hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so sweetly.

I quote with great pleasure one or two passages from Mr. Dewey, as illustrative of our common doctrine on human nature:

"The theologian says that human nature is bad and corrupt. Now taking this language in the practical and popular sense, I find no difficulty in agreeing with the theologian. And indeed, if he would confine himself—leaving vague and general declamation and

technical phraseology—if he would confine himself to facts; if he would confine himself to a description of actual bad qualities and dispositions in men, I think he could not well go too far. Nay more, I am not certain that any theologian's description, so far as it is of this nature, has gone deep enough into the frightful mass of human depravity. For it requires an acute perception that is rarely possessed, and a higher and holier conscience, perhaps than belongs to any, to discover and declare *how* bad, and degraded, and unworthy a being *a bad man* is. I confess that nothing would beget in me a higher respect for man, a real—not a theological and factitious—but a real and deep sense of human sinfulness and unworthiness—of the mighty wrong which man does to himself, to his religion, and his God, when he yields to the evil and accursed inclinations that find place in him. This moral indignation is not half strong enough in those who profess to talk the most about human depravity. And the objection to them is, not that they feel too much or speak too strongly, the actual wickedness, the actual and distinct sins of the wicked; but they speak too vaguely and generally of human wickedness; that they speak with too little discrimination to every man as if he were a murderer or a monster; that they speak, in fine, too argumentatively, and too much (if I may say so) with a sort of argumentative satisfaction, as if they were glad that they could make this point so strong."

The next extract is in advocacy of human nature, eloquently pleading for it in a low and guilty condition.

"The very pirate that dyes the ocean wave with the blood of his fellow-beings; that meets his defenceless victims in some lonely sea where no cry for help can be heard, and plunges his dagger to the heart that is pleading for life, which is calling upon him by all means of kindred, of children, and of home, to spare—yes, the very pirate is such a man as you or I might have been. Orphanage and childhood; an unfriended youth; an evil companion; a resort to sinful pleasure; familiarity with vice; a scorned and blighted name; seared and crushed affections; desperate fortunes—these are the steps that might have led any one amongst us to unfurl on the high seas the bloody flag of universal defiance; to have waged war with our kind; to have put on the terrific attributes; to have done the dreadful deeds; and to have died the awful death of the ocean robber. How many affecting relationships of humanity plead with us to pity him! That head that is doomed to pay the price of blood once rested upon a mother's bosom. The hand that did that accursed work, and

shall soon be stretched cold and nerveless in the felon's grave, was once taken and cherished by a father's hand, and led in the ways of sportive childhood and innocent pleasure. The dreaded monster of crime has once been the object of sisterly love and all domestic endearment. Pity him, then. Pity his blighted hope and his crushed heart. It is a wholesome sensibility, it is meet for frail and sinning creatures like us to cherish. It forgoes no moral discrimination. It feels the crime, but feels it as a weak, tempted, and rescued creature should. It imitates the great Master; and looks with indignation upon the offender, and yet is grieved for him."—*Dewey*.

Additional Remarks, &c.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ," says Mr Buddicom, "hath solemnly and emphatically said, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but that believeth not shall be damned.'" (Yes, but is this to believe what our opponents tell us, and to be baptized into the faith of Athanasius?) "Unitarians," he continues, "assert that they fulfil the requirement, and therefore are safe from the penalty. We, on the other hand, are assured, that as it would be treason against the sovereign of these realms, to acknowledge her claim only to a part of her dominions, while her royalty over the remainder was utterly denied; so the Unitarian scheme which would give unto the Saviour the honours of a prophet and a witness, while it would unsphere him from that full-orbed glory wherein He shines through the revelation of his grace, is treason against him and against the Majesty of God, who willeth 'that all men should honour the son, even as they honour the father.' Thus convinced, we deem the professors of that system to be under sentence of spiritual outlawry, which if it be not reversed, will end in the terrors of the second death."—Lect. 8. pp. 438, 439.

The tone in which we have often been spoken of in this controversy appears to assume that we in some degree doubt the sincerity or charity of our opponents. We deny them neither. We know the history of religion well enough to be aware that as severe things have been done in sincerity as to pronounce that men dishonour Christ and God, that they are under sentence of spiritual outlawry, and if they repent not (*i. e.* do not turn to the opinion of their antagonists) shall surely endure the second death; we can easily believe that men say these things sincerely; for except from the necessity of conviction, we do not imagine they would reiterate perdition

and denunciation as often as they do. We deny not the sincerity in which an opponent may hold an opinion or resist one: but though the motive may not be impeachable, the quality of the opinion itself may be in the last degree anti-social and pernicious. The men who built the Inquisition did it in perfect sincerity: the men who sat on its judgment-seats were for the most part sincere, so were those who dragged the heretic from his home to the dungeon, and from the dungeon to the stake. And so are those who tell us that our faith is damnable. Men may on account of belief consign antagonists to hell-fire for eternity; but unless the evidence be most clear, to pronounce the judgment requires a goodly quantity of courage. As little willing are we to refuse our opponents the charity they claim, if by that be meant a desire to promote good in their idea of it: but we may very fairly doubt the justness of that idea. Believing that heretics, such as we, are in the way to eternal destruction, it is neither inconsistent with candour or charity to tell us so, in the hope of reclaiming us; and if theologians imagined that inflicting bodily suffering might have a similar effect, we are compelled to admit them to the same merit. The worst effect of harsh and austere doctrines is that they produce harsh and austere feelings; and the professors of them, under their indurating process, can do deeds from principle which even bad men would rarely do from passion. One perverted motive is worse than a thousand evil actions. Charity in her own native sweetness is meek and gentle as the dove, and yet theology has often made her ravenous as the vulture; charity as she came from heaven marked her way in tears of mercy, but theology could so pervert her as to cause her wade to the lips in blood. The charity of the heart is very different from the charity of creeds; and when we hear English clergymen condemn the Romish Church as uncharitable, we naturally ask on what ground? Is it because she condemned heretics? So do you. Is it because she has a wrong test of heresy? Her test is substantially the same as your own. You assume that we do not believe in Christ, because we do not believe in your creed: she assumes that you do not believe in Christ because you do not believe in her councils: you denounce eternal torments on us for want of your faith; and she delivers you to the same destiny for want of her faith: the tabooed ground of heresy and orthodoxy may be circumscribed or extensive—the points may be few or many, the principle is the same, or if there be any difference, it is but breaking the big end or the little end of the egg. We are accused as traitors against God

and Christ, and to make the indictment clear against us, it is illustrated by the instance of rebellion against a sovereign. This is a heavy charge, but one both unjust and false. It is evil intention that constitutes crime: a traitor opposes his sovereign and *intends* his dethronement; but though we should even *mistake* the nature of Christ, can any one who thinks for a moment venture to say our intention is for his dethronement? Let us suppose the case, no uncommon one, of an Eastern monarch who should disguise himself, and that some of his subjects failed, in their ignorance of his rank, to pay him the customary honours; what should we think of his justice, if he should call this treason, and impale the wretches who were unconscious of having offended him. It is too monstrous even for Eastern despotism. Or take the case in our own history; what should we think of Alfred's rectitude and clemency, if when he ascended the throne from his poverty, he should have thrown the shepherd's wife into a dungeon and chains, because, in his disguise, she uttered against him a surly rebuke. The instance is not entirely parallel, but the analogy goes far enough for my purpose. Now, though Christ were in reality the Deity which orthodoxy proclaims him, the circumstances of his earthly life, and the concealment of his infinite nature, were certainly sufficient to excuse some in ignorance for taking him to be that which he appeared; and to punish them for so natural an error, would not be a vindication of majesty, but a capricious exhibition of cruelty.

The legal and political mode of illustration is a favourite with the reverend lecturer. P. 450, we have a quotation from Blackstone, and the distinction very admirably elucidated of private wrongs and public wrongs, civil injuries, crimes and misdemeanours, &c. Sir William Blackstone never, I imagine, anticipated the honour that his Commentaries would be used to illustrate the principles of the divine government; and one of the last ideas, I apprehend, that entered his brain in delivering his lectures, was, that he was giving expositions on the ways of Providence. The Preacher in the order of illustration, gave a passing blow "at those wretched and guilty disturbers of the public peace in one of our own colonies who lately crossed the borders of a friendly state to slay and ruin and destroy, under the name of *sympathizers*." An allusion, doubtless, extremely loyal; but in the present case not very logical. (Lect. p. 452.) In this part of the discourse we have other distinctions, showing that man is a public offender, that God is not a person but a sovereign, in relation to guilty man, and that a sovereign is different from a person; that God is not

a creditor but a judge, and that a judge is different from a creditor. All this may be very acute, very legal, but, theologically, it has one imperfection, that of mistaking entirely the relation between God and man, of turning false analogies into false premises, and, of course, deducing from them false conclusions: of properly having nothing to do with the true matter in hand, and leaving the question precisely where it was before. "Our opponents," says the Preacher, "assert that sins are to be regarded as *debts*, and as *debts* only." We assert no such thing, have never asserted it, but all the contrary, and to such an idea the whole tone of our argument and of our system is in most perfect contradiction. We have no such low view of God as to think that man could owe him anything, nor any such presumptuous view of man as to imagine he could make payment to his God. Yet upon this poor assumption whole pages of declamation are wasted, for if it serves any purpose it is but to beat down the man of straw which the lecturer himself had fashioned. We hold no such view, and therefore we have never defended any such. We do our best to maintain what we assert; if others assert doctrines for us, we leave them the pleasure of the refutation; although it is only when men invent opinions for opponents that they have the double enjoyment of first building up and then pulling down. We do not regard sins as debts for which payment can be made to God; but we may fairly assert that on this principle rests the whole scheme of orthodoxy. What are the atonement and righteousness of Christ but a payment or equivalent to God for the salvation of the elect?—the very nature of the system implies this idea, and in truth it is the only idea that gives it even the appearance of consistency; for crime as such cannot be punished in the person of another, but a debt can be fairly paid by the money of another. If I commit high treason against the sovereign—to borrow an analogy from the Preacher—it would be sad work to lay the head of some one else on the block for it—but if I owe a severe creditor a thousand pounds, a rich and generous friend may pay it in my stead, and no social principle is violated by the substitute.

Mr. Buddicom makes the following modest apology for the presumed infallibility of himself and brethren, and their right to attack all heretical deniers of it. "While, however," he observes, "we are prepared to contend for the lawfulness and duty of an affectionate inroad upon the regions of spiritual error, we remember that our *movement* is not purely and primarily aggressive. A volume of Lec-

tures, preached expressly on the controverted doctrines of Christianity (as the lecturer denominated his subjects), in a chapel now occupied by one of our respected opponents, has been before the world. In these and other similar measures, the fortress of true Christianity, the only safe munition of rocks for the souls of men, hath been attacked by mine, and sap, and open assault. And shall there be no attempt to countermine, no sally made, no arm raised, in a forward movement for the truth as it is in Jesus? Our regret is rather due to the culpable silence of the past, than to the proceeding of the present time." (Lect. p. 440.) The reverend and respected Preacher refers to a volume of Lectures, by the Rev. George Harris, delivered in this town some years ago: those Lectures, unfortunately, I do not possess; but I have read them with much pleasure, and many passages of them I should wish to quote in support of my own general arguments. But the Lecturer greatly mistakes if he imagines that we complain of orthodox aggression. Controversy, political and religious, is the fair expression of civilised and progressive opinion. We do not blame those who oppose us,—we have never done it,—we have not complained that war was made on us, but we did most righteously complain that the fair laws of warfare were denied us. Our people were invited to go to Christ Church to listen to wise and learned men, to be converted, by hearing their religion spoken of as blasphemy and outlawry—to hear *themselves* designated as enemies to their God, and dethroners of their Saviour, and the spiritual slayers of their kind. They were denied any religious equality. They were abused, and vituperated, and denounced; but they were not listened to—their condemnation was sternly uttered—but their defence had not even the poor tribute of a hearing. Nay, grave clergymen pleaded that they could not have their religious sensibilities disturbed or hurt by Unitarian roughness, as if manly controversialists were to shrink from opposition with the fastidious delicacy of timid devotees. We neither complained of controversy, nor avoided it; on the contrary, we met it promptly, sincerely, and willingly—with ability, it is possible, inferior to our opponents—but not with less zeal, less alacrity, or less honesty. When our respected opponents challenged our attendance, it was not as antagonists on the opposite sides of a subject open to discussion, but as accused to give in their confession of repentance, or as criminals to hear their last sentence of punishment. We, however, blame not the Lecturer, nor his party—we rather agree with him and them. We have received a lesson which we needed; Unitarians

have stood too long on the defensive, when they should have been on the aggressive: had they been faithful to their trust, it may be that the degrading dogma of original sin, and the atrocious doctrines of election and reprobation could not now, in this country, be matters of dispute. "Our regret (to use the words of the Lecturer) is rather due to the culpable silence of the past than to the proceedings of the present time." It is a remarkable fact in the history of religion, that all the doctrines which have been most generally condemned as heresy, have been pure or benignant ones; and all persecutions and religious hatreds, bodily or social, have been directed against their professors. Not to mention the Christians, who burned Jerome and Huss; we might refer even to the heathens who poisoned Socrates—to uphold the personality of Satan—the reality of his existence, and the malignity of his nature,—to declaim upon hell's torments and to announce eternal perdition on the great mass of God's family—to create excitement by the grossest pictures of vice and misery is the certain way to popularity. The popular taste, as it has yet been developed or nurtured, has been coarse and ferocious, and if any thing could prove to me the doctrine of universal depravity, it would be the toleration of the horrors of Calvinistic orthodoxy.

THE COMFORTER,

EVEN

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH,

WHO DWELLETH IN US, AND TEACHETH ALL THINGS.

A LECTURE,

ERRATUM IN FIRST LECTURE.

P. 44, last line, *for* Tillotson *read* Watson.

BEING THE NINTH OF A SERIES, TO BE DELIVERED WEEKLY, IN ANSWER TO A COURSE OF LECTURES AGAINST UNITARIANISM, IN CHRIST CHURCH, LIVERPOOL, BY THIRTEEN CLERGYMEN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

LIVERPOOL:
WILLMER AND SMITH, 32, CHURCH STREET.
LONDON:
JOHN GREEN, 121, NEWGATE STREET.
1839.

PREFACE.

In preparing this Lecture for the press, after an examination in its printed form of that to which it is a Reply, I do not find that the Trinitarian argument has been strengthened by additional evidence, or by a more logical statement, so as to require any modification of my impressions of its weight and character.

Mr. Bates has in his Appendix *drawn out* some of his scriptural evidence, and I can only require any one to examine it, in order not only to estimate its cogency in reference to this particular question, but also to obtain a very accurate idea of the peculiar genius of Trinitarian interpretation. I shall select two passages as perfectly descriptive of the manner in which the believer in a verbal and logical revelation draws doctrinal conclusions from the mere words of scripture.

Here is one of the Trinitarian *Scriptural proofs* of Three Persons in the Unity of the Godhead.

"2 Thess. iii. 5. 'The LORD direct your hearts into the love of GOD, and into the patient waiting for CHRIST.'

"In these passages the Three Persons are distinguished. The LORD to whom the prayer is in both instances directed; GOD, *even our Father*; and our *Lord Jesus* CHRIST. That the LORD thus distinguished from *God the Father*, and our *Lord Jesus Christ*, and addressed in prayer, is the HOLY GHOST, is evident from the analogy of Scripture, which teaches that *sanctification*, for which the Apostle prays, is the peculiar work of the Holy Ghost."—*Mr. Bates' Appendix, p.* 590.

Now, using the same description of logic, we have only to quote a passage in which *sanctification* is ascribed *not* to the Holy Ghost, but to GOD our FATHER, in order to overthrow the whole of this verbal and mournful trifling with the sublime and vast purport of revelation.

"Holy FATHER, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that *they* may be one, *as* we are . . . . *Sanctify* them through thy truth: thy word is truth."—John xvii. 11, 17.

The second descriptive specimen I select, of the genius of Trinitarian interpretation, is the following alleged *scriptural proof* of the separate Deity and Personality of the Holy Spirit.

"Rev. i. 4. 'JOHN to the seven Churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne.'"

The *seven* Spirits, we are told, is a symbolical designation of the One Spirit. Nothing however can be more clear, even on the *verbal* principle, than that the seven Spirits are the seven Messengers, Angels, or Ministers,

LECTURE IX.

THE COMFORTER, EVEN THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, WHO DWELLETH IN US, AND TEACHETH ALL THINGS.

BY REV. JOHN HAMILTON THOM.

"IF YE LOVE ME, KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS: AND I WILL PRAY THE FATHER, AND HE SHALL GIVE YOU ANOTHER COMFORTER, THAT HE MAY ABIDE WITH YOU FOR EVER; EVEN THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH; WHOM THE WORLD CANNOT RECEIVE, BECAUSE IT SEETH HIM NOT, NEITHER KNOWETH HIM: BUT YE KNOW HIM, FOR HE DWELLETH WITH YOU, AND SHALL BE IN YOU. I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU COMFORTLESS; I WILL COME TO YOU."—*John* xiv. 15—18.

It is very remarkable that whenever the doctrine of the Trinity is discussed, the debate is almost always exclusively occupied by the single question of the deity of the Christ, and if that can be established, the controversy is considered at an end. Controversialists glide from the doctrine of the deity of the Son to the separate deity of the Holy Spirit, in a way which plainly shows that one inroad being effected on the personal unity of God, and the principle once loosened, another division of it is conceded upon much easier terms, without fear, without caution, without reverence. Why indeed should men scruple to admit three persons into the unity of the Godhead after having got over the first great difficulty of admitting two? A third person adds nothing to the difficulty of a second person, and if we cannot maintain unbroken the principle of one God, in our own sense of oneness, then the extent to which the principle is violated, whe-

ther by three persons, or any other number, is really a matter of a very minor importance. Having admitted that there may be two persons in the godhead, it would be very absurd to take an objection against there being three; for the analogy of unity, in the only sense we are acquainted with it, the unity of a human being, having once failed us, we must never plead it again. The principle that admits two minds in the being of one God will equally admit any number whatever, provided Scripture accords to them the dignity, and our struggle and reluctance will be felt most strongly on the first of these invasions of our own idea of unity, and will yield more and more readily at each successive one.

This is the only explanation I can conceive, and a very natural one it is, of the weak and unguarded state in which Trinitarians have left the separate personality and deity of the Holy Ghost. I do not wonder at their preference for that word, *Ghost*, in this connection. It materializes the word Spirit, puts the true idea out of immediate sight, and is so far a preparation for introducing the conception of a third *person*, which never would naturally have arisen from the use of the more intelligible expression "the Holy Spirit," "the Spirit of God." I apprehend that all minds, though long familiarized with the idea of a plurality of persons in the godhead, would be greatly shocked, if that plurality was conceived to be either more or less than the mystic number three. A multitude of deities, discharging different offices, but partaking of the one Essence of the godhead, would be thought a completely Heathen conception—and a reduction of the present orthodox idea, so as to represent only two persons in the one God, would strike a Christian mind as scarcely less pagan. Yet upon Trinitarian principles this is evidently a mere prejudice of Custom. There is no more reason, so far as our understanding is concerned, for there being three persons in the godhead than for there being *only* two, and whether there be one, two, three, or a

countless number, is a question to which our Reason ought to be entirely indifferent, having no *a priori* opinion or principle of its own upon the subject: and submitting to the letter of the Revelation with equal readiness, whether it distributes the Essence of the Deity among a Trinity, or among any other plurality of minds. Now I would ask Trinitarians whether they have schooled themselves into submission to this principle—whether they would receive four persons in the Godhead as readily as they receive three, provided the same mode of inferential interpretation which now establishes the Trinity, succeeded in showing that a further distribution of the essence of the godhead was required, in order to make our Theology consistent with the exact wording of the Scriptures. I apprehend that most minds amongst us would revolt at the idea of four persons in one God, *contemplated as a mere possibility*. Yet surely in a Trinitarian this would be very unreasonable. As a *Scripture* doctrine he might reasonably discard it as unfounded—but as a possibility, as a subject on which, previous to Revelation, he ought to have no prejudice whatever, he must on his own principles have no objection to the plurality of divine persons extending to any number, and be as prompt, to submit his faith to five as to three, provided five can be shown to be the proper inference from the words of Scripture. A consistent Trinitarian must feel no *a priori* objection to any number of divine persons united together. Having conceded that on this subject his Reason is no guide, and his Nature no analogy, there is but one question he has a right to ask,—" Is it so written ?"

And even if it should be granted that Scripture reveals three divine persons and reveals no more, yet upon his own principles, a consistent Trinitarian should be cautious in asserting that there *are* no more. Scripture nowhere asserts that there are *only* three persons in the godhead—and surely it is being wise above what is written, for a Trinitarian to confine God's essence within the limits in which He has been

pleased to reveal Himself, and to make the communications He has opened upon us the measures of the infinite possibilities of His being. A Trinitarian reverently and with becoming modesty stating his own doctrine, and not presuming to know more of God than is revealed, ought to content himself with saying—that Scripture discloses three divine minds in one Deity, but that whether there are any *more* than three, Scripture does not declare, and he would hold it arrogant to assert. If the Unitarian is wise *contrary* to what is written in confining the unity of God to one person; the Trinitarian is wise *above* what is written in confining it to three persons, and with less excuse, for that one is neither more nor less than one is at least a natural supposition—but after having admitted that one may be three, there is nothing but precipitancy and dogmatism in determining that it can be *only* three. A consistent and scripturally modest Trinitarian should simply state, that God his Father, God his Redeemer, and God his Sanctifier, contained all the revelation that was required for the salvation of his soul—but as to whether there might not be other divine persons in the plurality of the godhead, he held it to be a high mystery, which he did not presume to speak upon—that only these were revealed, and therefore he knew no more, but yet he did not dare to assert that his necessities, the requirements of a being so feeble, comprised and exhausted the whole capabilities and personalities of the godhead. But Trinitarians are not so modest. They charge the Unitarian with presumption for limiting the divine essence to one Person—and then they proceed themselves, with no warrant from Scripture, and none *they* assert from Reason, to limit it to Three.

If two not three had been the favourite mythological number, if a Duality and not a Trinity had been the Platonic conception, then, I am satisfied, that the Christian world, though it might have witnessed the deification of the Christ, would never have heard of the separate deity of the Holy

Spirit. And this assertion is amply borne out by the historical fact, that the deification of the Spirit followed afterwards as a consequence from the deification of the Son, and that the earliest form of the charge made against the Platonizing Christians by stricter believers in the unity of the Deity, states the whole extent of their heresy to be that of introducing a *second* God,—nothing as yet being said about third.

It is well known to all in whom duty has so far prevailed over distaste, as to make them turn in sorrow the heavy pages of Ecclesiastical History, that there was no discussion respecting the divinity of the third person in the Trinity until nearly the end of the fourth century. Nothing can surpass the cool and easy confidence which sets aside this undeniable fact by boldly asserting that up to this time the doctrine was never disputed—and that the absence of evidence in support of this doctrine only arises from the absence of doubt, that nobody stated what nobody denied. What, the separate deity and personality of the Holy Ghost never doubted, and yet not one prayer addressed to Him in Scripture, not one ascription of praise, not one doxology in which his name is introduced, so that when the Church desired to associate the third person in the honours of Christian worship it could find no Scripture formula, and had to make one for the occasion;—not one debate for nearly four hundred years upon the deity of the Holy Ghost, although the deity of the Second Person, to whom the Third Person even after his deification was held to be subordinate, was constantly debated, and yet the doctrine never doubted nor denied! Now if the doctrine was never doubted or denied, since the doctrine of the deity of the Son was most certainly both doubted and denied, why is it that the Holy Spirit does not appear as the Second person in the Trinity instead of the Third—why is it that the Council of Nice previous to this time, when the doctrine *began* to be doubted and denied, asserts the deity of the

Father, and the deity of the Son, but does not assert the deity of the Holy Ghost—and why is it that the earliest charge against the philosophizing Christians was that of introducing a *second* God, if there was already a second divine person acknowledged, and therefore the true charge should have been that of introducing a *third?* It is remarkable that the same very learned writer, the late Professor Burton, who is the great Trinitarian authority upon these subjects, after having resolved the absence of controversy into the possible absence of doubt as to the deity of the holy Ghost, records the very first instance in which the Holy Spirit is introduced into a doxology of the Church as taking place in the fourth century. He quotes Philostorgius the Arian historian, who declares, "that Flavianus of Antioch, having assembled a number of monks, was the first to shout out, Glory to the Father, *and* to the Son, *and* to the holy Spirit; for before his time some had said, Glory to the Father, *through* the Son *in* the holy Spirit, which was the expression in most general use; and others, Glory to the Father, in the Son and holy Spirit."* Gibbon relates this matter thus. He is speaking of a temporary triumph of the Arians over the Athanasians, and of the means employed by the Athanasian laity to manifest their unwilling acceptance of the Arian Bishops. "The Catholics," says the historian, "might prove to the world, that they were not involved in the guilt and heresy of their ecclesiastical governor, by publicly testifying their dissent, or by totally separating themselves from his communion. The first of these methods was invented at Antioch, and practised with such success, that it was soon diffused over the Christian world. The doxology, or sacred hymn, which celebrates the glory of the Trinity, is susceptible of very nice, but material inflections; and the substance of an orthodox or heretical creed, may be expressed by the difference of a disjunctive or

* See Forrest on the origin and progress of the Trinitarian Theology, p. 40.

a copulative particle. Alternate responses, and a more regular psalmody were introduced into the public Service by Flavianus and Diodorus, two devout and active laymen, who were attached to the Nicene faith. Under their conduct, a swarm of monks issued from the adjacent desert, bands of well-disciplined singers were stationed in the cathedral of Antioch, the Glory to the Father, AND the Son, AND the Holy Ghost, was triumphantly chaunted by a full chorus of voices: and the Catholics insulted, by the purity of their doctrine, the Arian prelate, who had usurped the throne of the venerable Eustathius." Out of such disorders in the Church, from the rebellious device of laymen to insult an heretical Bishop, sprung the doxology of our present creeds.

It is very instructive to look a little closely into some of the passages from the early Fathers which are brought by Trinitarians as evidence of the recognition of their doctrines by the primitive Church. There is unquestionably much vague language that will readily coalesce with the conceptions of a modern orthodox believer; but as soon as you examine with any strictness, you find that though they use language very loosely, nothing could be further from their modes of thinking than modern orthodoxy. For instance, we find the Son and the Holy Spirit mentioned as objects of a Christian's reverence—but it is very remarkable how many of these cases occur when the writers are defending themselves against a charge of Atheism, as if they were desirous when repelling such charge to show how many sources of veneration their religion disclosed. The early Christians who believed in only one God were called Atheists by the Heathens. To believe in only one God was in their estimation the next thing to believing in none at all. Those who believed in many gods were likely enough to call the Christians Atheists, just as in the present day lecturers in Christ Church call Unitarianism a God denying Heresy.* In vindicating them-

* See the Rev. F. Ould's dedication of his Lecture.

selves against this dangerous calumny the early Christians were naturally led to extend rather than to diminish their objects of worship, and accordingly in a passage quoted by Professor Burton, from the earliest Father on whom dependence can be placed, we find not only the Son and the Spirit, but interposed between the Son and the Spirit, the angels of Heaven, associated together in their reverence. Hence the passage is quoted by Roman Catholics in support of the worship of Angels. And if it is good for the one purpose, it is equally good for the other; nay, if it is any proof of the separate deity of the Holy Spirit, it is equally proof of the deity of the angels who are mentioned before him. The passage is from Justin Martyr whom Professor Burton places A. D. 150. "Hence it is that we are called Atheists: and we confess that we are Atheists with respect to such reputed gods as these: but not with respect to the true God, the Father of justice, temperance, and every other virtue, with whom is no mixture of evil. But Him, and the Son who came from Him and gave us this instruction, and the host of the other good angels which attend upon and resemble them, and the prophetic Spirit we worship and adore, paying them a reasonable and true honour, and not refusing to deliver to any one else, who wishes to be taught, what we ourselves have learnt."* There is another passage from Justin Martyr, also given by Burton as evidence of the early recognition of the Trinity, but which is manifestly nothing more than the natural anxiety of the writer when meeting a charge that perilled his life, the charge of Atheism, to show the full extent of his sentiments of reverence. "That we are not Atheists," says Justin Martyr, "who would not acknowledge, when we worship the Creator of this Universe, and Jesus Christ who was our instructor in these things, knowing him to be the Son of this true God, and assigning to him the *Second* place. And I shall prove presently, that we honour the prophetic Spirit in

* Burton, Theol. Works, vol. ii. 2nd part, p. 16.

the *third* rank, and that we are reasonable in so doing."* Now let it be recollected that these two passages, extending as far as possible the objects of a Christian's reverence, occur in Justin Martyr's Apology for Christianity against its Gentile oppressors, in which he complains that the Christians were treated as Atheists, and unjustly punished for not worshipping the gods. I shall only quote one other passage exhibiting the modes of thinking respecting the Holy Spirit among the early Fathers. It is from Origen, A. D. 240, perhaps the most eminent of them all, and shows clearly, notwithstanding the frequent vagueness and obscurity of their writings, how far they were removed from modern Trinitarianism, and that their forms of thought were derived from Platonism much more than from Christianity, or more strictly from Platonism engrafted on Christianity. He is speaking of the Son, and commenting on those words at the beginning of St. John's Gospel—" all things were made by him."

" If it is true," says Origen, " that *all things were made by him*, we must inquire whether the Holy Ghost was made by him: for as it seems to me, if a person says that the Holy Ghost was made, and if he grants that all things were made by the Logos, he must necessarily admit that the Holy Ghost was also made by the Logos, the latter preceding him in order of time. But if a person does not choose to say that the Holy Ghost was made by Christ, it follows that he must call him unproduced, if he thinks that this passage in the gospel is true. But there may be a third opinion, beside that of admitting that the Holy Ghost was made by the Logos, and that of supposing him to be uncreated, namely, the notion of there being no substantial individual existence of the Holy Ghost distinct from the Father and the Son. We, however, being persuaded that there are three hypostases (persons), the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and believing that nothing is unproduced beside the Father, adopt this as the more pious and the true opinion, that all things being

* Burton, p. 21.

made by the Logos, the Holy Ghost is more honourable than all of them, and more so in rank than all the things which were made by the Father through Christ. And perhaps this is the reason why he is not called the very Son of God, there being only one who by nature and origin is Son, viz. the only begotten, who seems to have been necessary to the Holy Ghost, and to have assisted in forming his hypostasis, not only that he might exist, but also that he might have wisdom, and reason, and righteousness, and whatever else we suppose him to have, according to his participation in those qualities which we have before mentioned as attributed to Christ." "Such," says Burton, "is this extraordinary, and I must add unfortunate passage of Origen, which I have quoted at length, and have endeavoured to translate with the utmost fairness. If the reader should decide from it that Origen did not believe in the eternity of the Holy Ghost, he will think that the enemies of Origen were not without grounds when they questioned his orthodoxy. It is not my intention entirely to exculpate him. He is at least guilty of indiscretion in entering upon such perilous grounds and in speculating so deeply upon points which after all must elude the grasp of human ideas and phrascology." Professor Burton calls this passage "unfortunate," for no reason that we can see, except that it discloses too plainly Origen's ignorance of Modern Trinitarianism, and shows too clearly in what sense we are to understand the Platonic language of the Fathers.

There are two modes of proof by which Trinitarians undertake to establish the separate existence of the Holy Spirit as a third person in the godhead. The first mode is by inferences from such passages of scripture as seem to attribute the titles and offices of deity to the Holy Spirit. The second method of proof is by independent considerations of Theology which profess to demonstrate the necessity of a third person in the godhead in order to compleat the work of man's salvation.

Trinitarians say, that Scripture both calls the Holy Spirit

God, and assigns to Him a work which none but God could accomplish. Now in both these respects we have not a shadow of difference with the Trinitarians. We believe as firmly and we hope as fervently as they do, that the Holy Spirit is God, and that the Holy Spirit has connections with our souls which none but our God could hold. We have no controversy with the Trinitarians, when they assert the Deity, and Personality, and Operations of the Holy Spirit. It is a mere piece of controversial dexterity to put these points prominently forward as the true grounds of our difference—and, whether designedly or not, an unfair impression is produced against us, by such a mode of statement, as if we were deniers of the deity and agency of the spirit of God—if indeed any meaning could be found in such a denial, supposing we were extravagant enough to make it. To deny the deity of the Spirit of God, would be a proposition as absolutely without meaning as to deny the humanity of the spirit of man. We were told by the Lecturer in Christ Church to whom this subject was committed, that it was of no avail for Unitarians to advance passages in which the Holy Spirit signified not God himself, but his power and influence exerted upon man, for that these occasional meanings of the expression were fully conceded; and that what we have to do, is to disprove the Trinitarian interpretation of *other* passages which attribute to the Holy Spirit, deity, personality, and operation. Now the Trinitarians must allow us the privilege of taking our faith from ourselves, not from them, and in carving out for us this employment, the Lecturer at Christ Church would set us to the task of disproving our own convictions, of overthrowing our own interpretations, of answering and opposing *ourselves*. There is only one point of difference between the Trinitarians and ourselves upon this subject, and that is the only point to which their arguments never have a reference. They maintain and we maintain that the Holy Spirit is God. They concede and we concede that the ex-

pression "Holy Spirit" in scripture frequently signifies that portion of God's spirit which is given to man naturally or supernaturally. They maintain however that the Holy Spirit is not the one God, but a third person in the godhead—*and here we separate from them*, maintaining that the Scripture evidence for such a distribution of the Godhead among several persons is totally imaginary, and that the theological reasons for such a distribution betray the most arbitrary and unworthy limitations assigned by man to the infinite and spiritual nature of God. Now will it be believed that when Trinitarian controversialists treat this subject they uniformly put forward those views of it which we do not deny, as if we denied them, and they as uniformly pass over the only point of difference between us, and avoid all close grappling with it, laboriously proving that the holy Spirit is God, which of course we believe, and then taking for granted that he *is a third person* in a Trinity, leaving the argument at the very point where argument ought to have commenced? Will it be believed that the Lecturer at Christ Church exhausted his strength and time in assiduously proving that the spirit of God was God, and that it had understanding, will, and power? Will it be believed that of nearly a three hours' lecture, certainly not more than five minutes was devoted to the only point of difference between us—that the common parts of our faith were laboriously proved—if indeed such an identical proposition, as that the spirit of God is God, can be called faith—and the single controverted part left intact? I in my turn take the liberty of declaring that it is of no avail that Trinitarians adduce passages of scripture attesting the Deity, Personality, and Operations of the Holy Spirit, for that this is conceded, if an identical proposition can be conceded,—and that what they have to do is to prove that the spirit of God is not the one God, but a third person in the godhead—and if the Lecturer had devoted his three hours to

, the only point in controversy, he might have greatly

aided, or greatly injured his cause, and have afforded an opportunity for testing the mutual strength of our views in a way which is now not possible. Disappointed of finding the controversy conducted with any closeness by the Lecturer in Christ Church on the only point by us denied, namely a deity of the Holy Spirit, personally separate from the deity of our one God, I turn to a published sermon of Dr. Tattershall's, in the hope of finding some discussion of our true difference from an associated authority. But here unfortunately again precisely the same principle is pursued of proving what is not denied, and of passing most slightly over the only point of difference. In a sermon consisting of thirty-four pages just three are devoted to the matter in controversy,* and these I grieve to say occupied with reasonings so verbal and unsatisfactory, that one is amazed that a manly and reverential mind could offer or could accept them as the solid and substantial proofs of a doctrine that affects to such an extent the being and nature of God. I think it not unbecoming here to declare, that with respect to the two modes of proof adopted by Trinitarians to establish the separate deity of the Holy Spirit, the Scriptural proof, and the Theological proof, I have long and laboriously sought in their own writers, for some distinct controversial statement of the scriptural and theological adjustments of this subject; I have examined their scholars and critics for the verbal part of the argument, and their divines for the theological part of it, and nowhere can I find anything definite or tangible to grapple with or oppose. It is at least my conviction that never was so serious a doctrine as that of a third person in the godhead admitted upon evidence so small, and I cannot conceal my strengthened impression, that it has glided into most minds as an easy consequence from the deity of Christ. Again we avow our belief that the Holy Spirit is God, but we declare that we cannot find any scriptural evidence that he is a separate God (personally) from

* "The deity and personality of the Holy Spirit," pp. 20—23.

God our Father, or any theological evidence that He performs a work within our souls, which work may not be performed by God our Father. If Trinitarians wish to establish their own doctrine, it is to these two points that they ought to confine themselves.

Abandoned then to our own methods of discussing this subject by opponents who assert a doctrine that we deny, and prove only those portions of it that we admit, I shall endeavour to ascertain, first, the Scriptural meaning of the expression, " the Holy Spirit " or " Spirit of God."

I shall examine the more difficult passages which are usually appealed to in this controversy.

I shall examine what Trinitarians call " the work of the Spirit," in order to ascertain whether it requires a third person in the godhead, or whether God our Father is not sufficient for it.

And I shall close with some statement of our own views of the connections of the spirit of God with the spirit of man.

The expression " Holy Spirit " when used in scripture will I think always be found to designate not God as he is in Himself, whom no man knoweth, but God in communication with the spirit of man. Whether the Deity holds intercourse with his creatures naturally or supernaturally, the name applied to Him in scripture, with respect to those felt or manifested connections, is that of the Holy Spirit. And there is most holy and beautiful reason for this peculiar usage. God is a spirit; and he is therefore only spiritually discerned. Through our spirits He speaks to us. In our spirits He abides with us. Eye hath not seen him; ear hath not heard him—but through that portion of his spirit which He has given us, we know Him, and are His. It is not God without us, but God *within* us that we know and feel. Externally we know Him not; personally we conceive him not; as He is, in his own essence and perfections we cannot think of Him—but He has put His own spirit within us, and that, in

proportion as we have it and cherish it, reveals Him unto us —He has lighted up from Himself a candle of the Lord in our spiritual being, and if by communion with Him we keep oil in our lamps, and our lamps trimmed and burning, His spirit which bloweth where it listeth, listeth to blow upon us and to feed our flame. And how shall the spirit of man prepare itself for fresh communications from the spirit of God? Only by removing from his own spirit whatever is at variance with the spirit of God—by cleansing the temple, that the holy one may be able to come to us and manifest himself to a nature that has reverently sought to put away all deadening impurity, and to brighten the spiritual image in which it was made—by courting the voices of the soul—by listening amid the tumults of the world to hear God speaking in our conscience—by cherishing through obedience, and inviting through prayer the intimations, that by His spirit, from which ours are derived, He gives us of His will. The spirit of God originally made the spirit of Man: the spirit of God retains its connections with the spirit of Man so long as man does not by unholiness and alien sympathies drive out that holy Spirit: and in measures more abundantly as we prepare ourselves to receive of His, does He hold communion with us through affections and affinities fitted to apprehend Him; and He transforms the will that obeys Him from glory to glory as by the spirit of the Lord. I apprehend that the preparation which was made by God for the reception of the gospel and spirit of Jesus Christ, shows the preparation which all men must make who would qualify themselves for fresh communications from the Holy Spirit of our Father. The baptism of repentance prepared the way for the baptism of the holy spirit and of fire. The heart had to be cleansed before the spirit of God could descend upon it, and hold communication with it. And ever must there be a Baptist Ministry breaking the dread repose of sin, awakening the dead heart, and creating the consciousness of want, before the Christ of God can breathe in his gentle breath upon our

souls, saying unto us, "receive ye the holy spirit." The holy spirit of God reveals itself to the spirit of man in proportion as we remove unholiness from us. What use of language then can be more affectingly elevating and solemn than that which designates God, when in communication with man, as the Holy Spirit? A spirit, he is spiritually discerned: and holy, only those that are holy have affinities with Him.

Such then is the primary signification of the expression Holy Spirit when used in the Scriptures—the Holy Spirit of God naturally or supernaturally in communication with the spirit of man, and in fuller communication in proportion as man by holiness seeks it and prepares himself for it. From this however there is derived a secondary signification, and so natural and easy is the derivative meaning, that it is a strong confirmation of its primary. That portion of his spirit which God communicates to man, may be regarded as separated from Him. It has entered into man and become his. It is a gift, an inspiration from our God. Man has become the possessor of it, but still God is the origin of it, and therefore though imparted to us it may still be spoken of as God's holy spirit. There are therefore in Scripture two significations of the Holy Spirit—the primary one—God in communication with man—and the secondary one—that portion of his spirit which God has communicated, naturally or supernaturally, and which has become ours. We have received the Holy Spirit, when we have spiritually received what only God can communicate. These two comprise, I believe, all the meanings of the expression, Holy Spirit, *first*, God communicating to man, and *secondly* that portion of His spirit, which, by communication, man's spirit has received.

I shall give some instances of each of these applications of the phrase.

There can be no difficulty in all those cases in which the *holy* Spirit signifies God himself in spiritual communication

with man.—"And when they bring you into the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers; take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say. For the Holy Ghost shall teach you, in that same hour, what ye ought to say."—Luke xii. 11, 12. Now in the parallel passage in St. Matthew's Gospel we have the expression, the Holy Ghost, explained to mean the spirit of God our Father. "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak. For it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."—Matt. x. 19, 20. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men spake, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them—so they being sent forth by the Holy Spirit departed unto Seleucia."—Acts xiii. 2, 4.

The expression the "Spirit of God" is sometimes used with the same signification, only with this difference, that "the Spirit of God" frequently signifies the essence and being of God as He is in Himself, whilst the expression "the Holy Spirit" is I believe never employed except to designate our heavenly Father when in living communication with the spirits of his children. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man that is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man [or no one] but the spirit of God."—1 Cor. ii. 11. Here if the spirit of man means man, the spirit of God must mean God, and how in opposition to language so precise and definite, a separate personality could be introduced into the godhead, called the spirit of God, it is difficult to imagine. "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?"—Ps. cxxxix. "By his spirit he has

garnished the heavens: his hand has formed the crooked serpent (the galaxy).—Job, xxvi. 13.

I shall now adduce some of the more remarkable cases in which the various expressions, "spirit," "holy spirit," and "spirit of God," are used to designate that portion of God's spirit which naturally or supernaturally has entered into man, and become ours, but which in reference to Him from whom it was derived, and with whom it retains blessed connections, is called the spirit of God. God being a Spirit, and man being a spirit, whatever man knows or feels of God, may, not figuratively, but with the strictest truth, be called the Holy Spirit within him. "If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him."—Luke, xi. 13. Now that the Holy Spirit signifies here not a third person in the godhead, but our heavenly Father's gifts and inspirations to the soul, is clearly shown by the parallel passage in St. Matthew's gospel—"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give *good things* to them that ask Him."—Matt. vii. 11. "But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit: for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. Now here the spirit is used first in its primary sense of God in communication with man, and immediately after in its secondary sense of that portion of His spirit communicated to man, for it is just in proportion as it partakes of His spirit that the spirit of man searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. God enlightens and man receives—but the light which has entered into man, since it came from God, may well continue to be called the Spirit of God. "Now we

received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which

is of God;—but the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But we have the mind of Christ." —1 Cor. ii. 12—16. Here the Apostle distinctly declares that our portion of the spirit of God is "the mind of Christ." In proportion as we have that we know Him, the only true God, whom to know is life eternal. "Likewise the spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered."—Rom. viii. 26. Now nothing can be more marvellous in all the marvels of scripture interpretation, than that this spirit within us which vents itself in groanings that cannot be uttered should ever have been referred to a third personality in the godhead. How beautiful is this passage when truly and *spiritually* considered! We know not what to pray for as we ought; our spiritual apprehension is feeble and dim; and our vague yearnings after the heavenly and the perfect are not distinct enough to present clearly-defined objects to our pursuit and love; yet we have a holy impulse within us, a divine tendency leading us towards God; God has given us this Spirit, and partaking of His nature it sighs after the perfection to which it is akin; it knows not fully its heavenly origin and end, but still true to the divine instinct it yearns after Him and tends towards Him; it sighs for a glory and a happiness which it cannot distinctly conceive or express, but God who gave it understands the prayer, and hears this intercession of His own spirit—that divine impulse planted by Himself which now supplicates Him to make bright its dim longings and to help it forwards unto that glory towards which the divinity within it tends—and He who searcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of that spirit which He himself put there, and that it maketh intercession with Him, for all holy ones,*

* "And he that searcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because it maketh intercession for the Saints, according to *the will* of God." —Rom. viii. 27.

that He would fulfil the promise of the heavenly impulse that sighs for good.* How has Trinitarianism destroyed the spiritual power of the Scriptures, by taking all this beautiful and holy meaning out of the individual heart, and for the sighings which cannot be uttered after the immortal and the good, which God, who inspired them, comprehends and blesses, substituting a third Person in the godhead who intercedes for us to another Person, with groanings that cannot be uttered!

I believe that these two significations of the expression, "Holy Spirit," so closely connected as scarcely to be two, will explain all the cases of its scriptural occurrence; first, God Himself in communication with the Soul, and secondly, that portion of His spirit which He has communicated to man, and which as being His, derived from Him, and a portion of the true knowledge of His Mind, is called His Holy Spirit.

I shall now examine the Scriptural evidence which is chiefly relied upon in this controversy, as proving, not the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit, for here we agree, but a personality and deity distinct from those of God our Father.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy

* "It is said that God has promised his Spirit to those who ask for it. But the gift of the SPIRIT, that *unction* of which St. John speaks (probably in allusion to the anointment of the Hebrew priests, the interpreters of the Old Law), was not intended as a check but as a GUIDE to the rational mind of man. 'He will *guide* you into all the truth,' namely of the simple Gospel. The Divine Spirit of TRUTH has been promised to sincere Christians, to guide them into all that concerns their moral safety. The two SPIRITS—the Spirit (i. e. the mind, so we may call it without irreverence) of God, and the spirit of man, though infinitely apart from each other in their nature, are clearly represented by St. Paul as analogous (I might say *akin*) to each other. Nor could it be otherwise, since the one is the fountain-head of reason, the other a derived stream. 'Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us (with sighs not expressed in words);' i. e. the divine impulse after holiness which is in us, makes us sigh for what we cannot express: but God, who gives us that Spirit, knows what it is we wish for."—*Observations on Heresy and Orthodoxy*, by the Rev. J. B. White.

Ghost."—Matt. xxviii. 19; or, into the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the word, "name," by an idiom of the Hebrew language, being redundant.

To baptize into a person was a form of expression signifying the reception of the religious ideas associated with that person. Thus the Jews were said to be baptized into Moses, because they received the religious ideas associated with the institutions of that Prophet: and on the other hand, the Samaritans were said to be baptized into Mount Gerizim, because they received the religious ideas associated with the belief that there, and not at Jerusalem, was the appointed place of the Temple. The formula then of baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, signified nothing more than the acceptance of the religious ideas associated with God in this new manifestation of Himself, revealed through the Christ, and accompanied by the operations of His Spirit, witnessing, both internally and externally, to the new light that had come into the world, the promised reign of the spirit of God. These were the words which most readily were associated with, and suggested those religious ideas which were looked upon as constituting the characteristic faith of one who was willing to enter into the gospel kingdom of Heaven, that is, to adopt the *Christian* idea of God and of Religion. The Father, the Christ, the Spirit of God in us giving us some communion with that Father, by uniting us through spiritual sympathies with that Christ—is not this of the very soul of Christianity? God manifested in Jesus, and our souls accepting the revelation, because the spirit of our Father within us draws us towards him who had the same spirit without measure—is not this to express in a few words all the characteristic and peculiar ideas of Christianity, and therefore most fit to be used as suggesting summarily to matured converts the new faith into which they were baptized? The same set of ideas might have been as fully expressed by the shorter form of being baptized "into

Christ," for this would imply the possession and acceptance of all the religious ideas associated with his person and ministry—and accordingly we find that in every recorded case of baptism or allusion to baptism in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the Epistles, the expression simply and briefly is to "baptize into Christ," and never once is there an allusion to the form of baptism into the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Now this demonstrates two things: first that the Apostles did not look upon these words as *a form prescribed by Christ*: and secondly, that they did not regard them as a confession of faith in a tri-personal God, else would they never have neglected all mention of the *first* and *third* persons, and simply baptized into Christ, that is, into the religion of the Christ. There is a remarkable confirmation of this view, if indeed it can be supposed to want confirmation, in the language of Paul to some disciples at Ephesus, who had not received the witnessing power and presence of the Holy Spirit. They declare that they had not so much as heard whether there was any Holy Spirit. To *what*, then, says the Apostle were you baptized; not into *whom*, observe, but into *what* were you baptized,—that is, was not the manifestation and participation of God's Spirit one of the religious ideas and expectations of your faith as converts. And they answer that they had only been baptized into the baptism of John, who had *promised* the Holy Spirit, but had no power to *confer* it. And then Paul baptized them into Jesus, and they received the Holy Spirit. Now can any one read this passage and believe that the Holy Ghost implies the third person in a Trinity: was it not simply a portion of God's spirit received by the first believers as an attestation to the religion of the Christ?

Nothing can be more arbitrary than to assert that baptism implies the personality and deity of that into which a person is baptized. The Apostle Paul says that Christians were baptized into the death of Christ. Rom. vi. 3. Is the death

of Christ therefore a person and a God? Is it not simply one of the religious ideas which their faith embraced?

The personality and deity of the Holy Spirit we indeed do not deny; but the methods by which Trinitarians attempt the proof of this self-evident proposition, are, like all proofs of identical propositions, unsatisfactory to an extreme. The Lecturer in Christ Church, when meeting the objection, that baptism into Christ was no proof of his deity, because we have also the expression, "baptism into Moses," dropped out of sight the true bearing of the objection against the *deity* of Jesus, and argued that the expression, baptism into Moses, was so far a proof of the personality of the Holy Spirit, because Moses was a person. Was the death of Christ, a person? Was Mount Gerizim, a person? We do not deny the personality of the Holy Spirit—though this is no way of proving it. We do deny that the deity of Christ is implied in baptism into his name, and the force of the expression, baptism into Moses, in this bearing of it, was either not seen or was put aside.

The argument, that because *three words* follow one another, without any expressed distinction, they must all refer to subjects of the same nature, co-equal and co-extensive, and this, too, as the strongest, indeed the only direct evidence of a Trinity in the Godhead, is really one of those arguments for a doctrine of revelation, which a mind with any reverence knows not how properly to discuss. I am glad to be able to say, that Dr. Tattershall pronounces this to be only a *presumptive* proof of the separate personality of the Holy Spirit, that is, in fact, no proof at all, but merely such a hint as might lead to the presumption that there may be additional evidence, and which, therefore, in the absence of such additional evidence, amounts to nothing. If any one, however, advances such an argument, we have only to ask first, is any one really content to rest such a doctrine on such a proof, and call this Revelation? and secondly, to advance in our turn, other pas-

sages of Scripture, where this principle of interpretation cannot be maintained. If the concurrence of the words, Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, necessarily implies that each of these refers to a person who is God, and that when taken together they make up the entire nature of God—then, I ask, what is the necessary inference from such expressions as these,—"I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and *the elect angels*, that thou observe these things?"—1 Tim. v. 21. Now if the argument is conclusive that infers in the one case the deity of Jesus, it must be equally conclusive, when it infers, in the other, the deity of the elect angels. The Trinitarian answer will be,—"We know that the angels are not God, and in accordance with this knowledge, we interpret the passage:" and equally do we answer, that when such a passage is given us as *proof* of the deity of the Lord Jesus, we know that he was a man, and in accordance with this knowledge do we interpret the passage. Other instances might be given of similar modes of expression:—"And all the people greatly feared the Lord *and Samuel*," 1 Sam. xii. 18; and more strikingly still, Rev. iii. 12, *where the name of a place* is associated as a religious idea, with the names of God and Christ. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of Heaven from my God, and [*I will write upon him*] my new name."

There is only one other passage in which these three expressions occur together; and it must have a precisely similar explanation: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all." Now here the expression "*communion* of the Holy Spirit," fixes the meaning of the passage. The word communion signifies "participation," "a having in common." Thus St. Paul speaks of "the communion of the

sufferings of Christ," Philipp. iii. 10. In this sense, then, it can have no reference to a person, and must signify simply a participation of that spiritual presence, comfort, and power of God, which was the promise and the witness of the religion of the Christ. In explaining such passages, we have again and again to recal ourselves to the belief, that we are actually considering the strongest Scriptural assertions of the doctrine of a Trinity of persons in the unity of the Godhead. The first Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians closes thus: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus." Who thinks of inferring the equality of Paul with Jesus? And yet, if such a mode of reasoning is allowable, from the close of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, it is impossible to give any reason for its not being equally conclusive when applied to the close of the first Epistle of the Corinthians. But such verbal reasonings are in every way unworthy of the solemn character of revelation, nor can the mind long dwell upon them without feeling how painfully they interfere with the sentiment of Reverence, and what a lowering it is of Christ and Christianity to place them in such lights.

The portion of Scripture, however, which is mainly relied upon to prove the *distinct* deity and personality of the Holy Spirit, is that most solemn and faithful promise of Christ to his disciples, in which the Spirit of Truth is described as a Comforter which the Father would send in his name, and who, when he came, would testify of Jesus, and bring to their remembrance all things that he had said unto them, but which they had not understood. Now let us connect this promise of a Comforter previous to his death, with a similar promise after the resurrection, and then endeavour to ascertain the meaning. In the first chapter of the Book of Acts, at the eighth verse, it is written, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea,

and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." Now we shall find that the Holy Spirit which came upon them was the Spirit of Truth, a truer knowledge of Christ, a portion of the Spirit of God, a sympathy with and an understanding of the Mind of the Father of Jesus, which they did not possess before;—in the one case comforting them for the loss of their friend and their master, by giving them a participation of his and of his Father's Spirit,—in the other case, qualifying them spiritually to be witnesses unto him, to be his Apostles and Preachers, an office for which their previous misconceptions of the true character of the Christ, their alienation from the true Spirit of God, as manifested in Jesus, had totally disqualified them. Why it was that Jesus must "go away," in order that the Spirit of Truth might come unto them, in order that the Spirit of the world should be separated from their ideas of the Christ, and the Spirit of God take its place, we shall fully see. Previous to the death of Jesus, the views of the Apostles respecting their Messiah were Jewish and worldly—after the Resurrection and Ascension they became Christian and Spiritual. How was it that Jesus must personally leave them, in order that the Spirit of Truth might come unto them? "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."

The Death, the Resurrection, and the Ascension of the Christ, introduced a necessary change into the conceptions of the Apostles; these drove out of their Messianic idea the spirit of the World, and introduced into it the spirit of God. They could not retain their Jewish ideas of the reign of the Messiah, in connexion with the crucified Jesus. If they held by their Jewish faith on this matter, they must abandon Jesus. If they held by Jesus, they must abandon their Jewish ideas, and remodel their faith. But God takes care that they shall hold by Jesus: and this is His mode of spiritualizing their conceptions of Christ and of Christianity.

God lifts him from the dead and places him in Heaven. The Christ returns to earth to show that God was with him; and he ascends into Heaven, to repel the imagination which otherwise might possibly arise, nay, which actually had arisen, that even yet he might raise his standard on the earth, and realize the gigantic illusion of the Jew. By this means, the Apostles were placed in this position:—they must retain their faith in Jesus, for how could they battle against God, or hold out against such evidence as the Christ rising from the tomb, and the Christ passing into the skies;—and yet if they are to regard Jesus as their Messiah, they must modify all their Jewish views, and conceive of the Christ anew. And accordingly this was the plan and process of their conversion, of their introduction to the true Christianity, of their baptism into the Spirit of God. Since Jesus was thus evidently the Christ, and yet could not be adapted to their Jewish views, of course all their Jewish views must yield, and adapt themselves to *him*. His life and destinies were the *fixed* facts, with which their conceptions of the Christ must now be harmonized. You now see how when the Spirit of Truth came upon them, it testified of Jesus, it took of his and showed it unto them, it threw illumination upon words and deeds of his, which, when contemplated from the Jewish point of view, caught not the sympathies of their souls, and like invisible writing, waited for the heat and light of Truth to fall upon them, and bring out the meaning. His Death struck down a principal part of their errors: and his Exaltation forced upon them a new idea of his kingdom. Never again could they confound the Messiah with a temporal prince. Whatever Christianity might be, henceforth it must be connected with the immortality of Heaven. Christianity could not be separated from the Christ, and the Christ was with God; and they remembered his prayer and promise, that they were to be with him where he was.

All this would necessarily be suggested to them from their identifying the Christ with the risen Jesus. Nothing more would be necessary to unfold this train of spiritual thought. It was the first fulfilment of that profound prophecy, "When the Comforter is come, even the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me, and shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." And this Spirit of Truth did lead them into all truth—it gave them no new revelation, but it called to their remembrance, and taught them to understand a revelation which Jesus had before offered to them in vain—and so, in the words of his own promise, it glorified him, for it "took of his, and showed it unto them." The Apostles were now in a position to look upon the Christ from a right point of view, and to receive the Spirit of Truth and God. The scales of illusion dropped from their eyes, and they began to see Jesus as he was. From the hour that circumstances constrained them to draw their Christianity from the life and destinies of the Christ, their minds began to open, and the Spirit of Truth to teach them all things, and to call to their remembrance whatsoever Jesus had said unto them, no longer dimly understood, but irradiated with moral light, because seen in right connexions, and explained by the interpretation of events. Who can retain his fancies in opposition to direct experience? and experience was now enlightening the Apostles. How could they go on dreaming of an Earthly Prince, when their Christ was in the skies? From that hour their souls began to be transfigured, and they walked in the light of the other world, and the Christ to whom they looked became their leader to Immortality. How could they go on in their unspiritual imaginations, when the Captain of their Salvation stood constantly before their eyes, a crucified man, and a risen immortal? From that hour they became soldiers of the Cross, and their only victories were

over themselves, and the powers of evil; and the only battle-cry of the Son of Man, when idol after idol fell prostrate before the Truth, and their Master in the skies, in the successes of his faith, led on the movements of humanity, and, wherever his spirit struck root, banded a new force against the enemies of man, and mustered fresh hosts for conquest. How could they go on in their national arrogance, and in their sectarian intolerance, when they were obliged to draw their moral notions of Christianity from the life of Christ, and that spoke such different lessons? From that hour their anti-social temper began to soften, their exclusiveness to bend and give way, their deep-cut lines of national distinctness to disappear in the fully developed features of our common humanity. In the light of *his* Spirit, what *could* they be but children of God, and brethren of mankind? They had to harmonize his Kingdom with his Character, and that led them into all truth. They had to read the glory of God in the face of Christ; and the light that beamed there was grace and truth. They had to take their Christianity from the Master's life, and that kept them right. Its lesson was of the one fold, and the one shepherd—of the one God and Father of all, and of one type of the connexions between humanity and Heaven—one Mediator between man and God, the man Christ Jesus. And so at last, when fitted for it by the teaching of events, the Spirit of Truth, at once their Comforter and their Teacher, descended upon them, and then they became "witnesses unto him." They read his life anew, and reported it to the world, and the world read it too, and has ever since been studying that exhaustless revelation. They saw in it more and more of the Saviour's spirit and purposes, and after the illumination had come upon them, the providence of God so disposed the external events that affected the infant Church, that they went forth bearing the light that lighted them unto all the world. Persecution scattered them from land to land, and they went carrying with them their priceless treasure. They were hunted from city to city, but all the faster flew the Gospel.

The stake received them, and it became as a new cross of Christ, and the blood of his martyrs witnessed unto him. Are we speaking of the same men who in Gethsemane's garden forsook their Lord and fled—who in the Temple Court denied him to his face—who, when he was led to the Cross, abandoned him in terror, and when he died there, laid their heads in the dust, because their poor ambition was fallen to the earth? Are they the same men, who in the Gospels are narrow-minded, ambitious, and false—that in the Acts of the Apostles come forth bold, resolute, spiritual witnesses for Jesus, and dauntless martyrs to his truth? We can scarcely believe that we are reading of the same men, when we turn from the page of the Evangelists to the record of their deeds, *after* the Death and the Ascension of the Christ annihilated their errors, and the Spirit of Truth and of God had fallen upon them. Contrast the prayer,—"Lord grant us to sit on thy right hand and on thy left in thy kingdom," or, "Lord wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"—with this, "Lord, thou art God, which hast made Heaven and Earth, and the Sea, and all that in them is; who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the Earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done: And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word; by stretching forth thine hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus." How came this difference? What passed over them and turned them into new men? The Spirit of Truth had come unto them, that great Comforter, the Spirit of understanding and of God: they saw it all, and they were worldly and weak no more, but

strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might? And this Comforter never again left them; the truth broke upon them and became their stay for ever,—it was the Spirit of God dwelling in them, and abiding for ever, his imperishable light in the soul, once given never to be withdrawn. It was just the difference between Spiritual light and Spiritual darkness, in their effects upon character. It was just the difference between the spirit that is of the world, and the spirit that is of God. It was just the difference between our nature when it is right and when it is wrong with God; when it is stumbling in darkness, the dupe of illusions, and when it is furnished with everlasting principles, and walking in the light of life. In the Gospels they are men palsied by the feebleness of error —in the Acts of the Apostles they are men omnipotent in the power of Truth. Is this change in their characters capable of being accounted for? Yes, if you grant the facts of Christ's history,—but not otherwise. How otherwise you are to get across the chasm between the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, I know not. Take those facts as causes, and the bridge is easy. What a step is it from the fishermen of Galilee to the Apostles of Christ—from the ignorance of Jewish peasants, to the Communicators of the mightiest impulse that Society has ever felt, the agents of the mightiest influence that ever Providence has put forth upon the soul of man,—the creators of new institutions, new forms of character, new civil relationships;—before whose preaching religions and empires fell, —at whose word Liberty first started into life, not as a spirit of opposition, but as the gentle child of brotherhood and love,— and who are still in the monuments they have left behind them, the heralds of human progress and the revolutionizers of the world! Who will deny that the spirit of God was here? Not we: we are ready to maintain it against the world. Who denies that the spirit of God still accompanies his Gospel? Not we: we believe it in the depths of our hearts. How wonderful the impulse, these men gave, and still give to the heart

of the world! What difficulties had they to conquer! their own characters, and violent prepossessions—and they conquered these. The curse of the Priest, the arm of the Ruler, the scoff of the People—and they conquered these. The attractions of Heathenism; the licentiousness of its morality; the gracefulness of its idolatry; its religion for the senses; its philosophy for the sceptic; its indifference to speculative truth; its equal regard for all gods, and all forms of worship that would only be content to dwell together in peace,—and they conquered these. Think of this wonderful History, and say whether you can explain it except as the New Testament explains it. What would account for the fortunes of the Apostles, if Christianity was not from God? The world of Causes and Effects is but a game of Chance, if such things can be, and their origin an accidental imagination, their foundation a falsehood or a dream. Who will account for such men being enlightened against their own wills, and forced into the front ranks of humanity contrary to their own desires if the history is not true? But rob not the History of its true power—take not the spirit of life out of the gospel—by telling us of a third person in the Trinity whom Jesus sent to supplant the free minds of the Apostles. No, it was the free spirit of God acting upon the free spirit of men that opened their eyes to see the things that were hidden from them before; and they walked forth in the light of these wondrous events, and looked now upon their Christ as those from whose spiritual sight the bandage of the world had been taken away. The Comforter, which is the Spirit of TRUTH, came unto them, and taught them all things, and rectifying their former misconceptions took of the things of Christ, and showed it unto them. He spoke not of himself. He added nothing to the revelation already made by Jesus:—the divine characters were already impressed on the life and destinies of the Christ—and the Spirit of Truth guided them to it, and wrought out the full meaning of the already finished revela-

tion. Still does the world want light to read that revelation. Still does many an interpreter come to the reading of it with a Jewish veil upon his heart. But there is new light still to break forth out of God's word. Although it would almost seem as if another day of Pentecost would be needed to drive out the spirit of the world, the spirit of system and of man, by the mightier Spirit of God—and to guide our exclusive tempers, our sectarian and narrow hearts into the religion of reality—of the merciful and perfect Christ, full of grace and truth.

It is impossible to display with any minuteness the confusion that is introduced into the Scriptures by the supposition that the Holy Spirit is a third infinite Mind associated with the Father and the Son. In one passage it is said, "If I cast out devils by *the Spirit of God*, then the kingdom of God is come unto you;" in another passage it is said, "If I with *the finger of God* cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come unto you." Are we to understand then different things by "the Spirit of God" and "the finger of God,"—or do they not both plainly signify the power and presence of the One God who wrought in Christ:—"the Father who dwelleth in me, He doeth the works."

In one passage it is said, "Wait for the promise of the Father—ye shall be baptized with *the holy spirit* not many days hence." In another passage of the same writer it is said, "Tarry ye in the city, until ye be endued with *power from on high*." Are we to understand by the Holy Spirit anything different from 'power from on high:' or rather are we not to understand by both the fulfilment of the promise of the Father by His own power and presence?

In one passage it is said, "We are his witnesses of these things, and so is also *the Holy Spirit*, which God hath given to them that obey Him." In another passage it is said, "The *works* that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me." Is it not evident then that *the works* which the Apos-

tles did, were the works of God, His spirit working by them, witnessing to the truth of their testimony?

If the Holy Spirit is a distinct Person from God the Father, then the third Person, and not the first person in the Trinity, nor the second person, must on the Trinitarian view be regarded as the Father of Jesus, for it is written, "the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." And yet the Trinitarian hypothesis is, that it was neither the third person, nor the first, but the second person in the godhead, that took humanity into union with his deity. But there is no end of these painful inconsistencies. So again Jesus is said to be raised from the dead by God, and again to be "quickened by the Spirit:" but surely the Trinitarian hypothesis would require that the divine nature of the Christ, the second person in the Trinity, should raise up the human Jesus, with which it had been united. Who will harmonize these things for us? Who can without pain, nay, without asking pardon of God for the irreverence, contemplate His spiritual nature in such representations?

It is said of the Holy Spirit, that He would not speak of himself. Can He then be a distinct God in the unity of the godhead, and not speak of Himself? Is this the reason that Scripture contains no proof of his separate existence? Is it not evident that the Spirit of Truth, *added nothing* to the revelation that was in Christ, but brought it out, *illuminated*, by an after influence on the minds of the Apostles, what he said and did?

It is said in Scripture that no one knows the Son but the Father—and that no one knows the Father but the Son:—but if the Holy Spirit is a third person in the godhead, equal in every respect, this must be an erroneous statement.

The last scriptural proof I shall give that the Holy Spirit is not a third infinite Person in the godhead is the very decisive one that Scripture offers not a single ascription of praise

or glory to Him, and contains not a single doxology in which He is included. Could this be so if he was really and distinctively God? Scripture contains ascriptions of praise to Christ, and even to the Angels; it connects together the names of God and Christ, in innumerable cases where it makes no mention of the Holy Spirit.—John v. 17. xiv. 21. "Father!—this is life eternal to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Now if Trinitarianism is true, the Father, and even with the addition of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, does not constitute the only true God.

"Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."—1 John i. 3.

"Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love."—2 John i. 3.

"He that abideth in the doctrine of the Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."—2 John i. 9.

"For whoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels."—Luke ix. 26. 1 Tim. v. 21.

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels."—Rev. iii. 5.

"And every creature which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."—Rev. v. 13.

Now if it be a fact that there is not one scriptural ascription of glory to the Holy Ghost, how is it that the Church of England can so confidently say, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: *as it was so in the*

[illegible] The beginning that [illegible] *begun after* all the books of t[illegible] New Testament were written. We have already traced [illegible] the beginning of that doxology, in t[illegible] [illegible]—and a beginning in its [illegible] [illegible] not very reputable, nor such as shou[illegible] [illegible] by those who preach submission to *Chur*[illegible]

The [illegible] Lardner, modest as learne[illegible] [illegible] the assumption contained in this doxology [illegible] the beginning." "Doubtle[illegible] [illegible] very frequently, and with great devotio[illegible] [illegible] Does not that deserve conside[illegible] [illegible] Is there any such doxology in the New Testament [illegible] how can it be said to have been *in the beginning* [illegible] the books of the New Testament the most ancien[illegible] and the most authentic Christian writings in all the world [illegible] It matters not much to inquire, when this doxology was fir[illegible] used, or how long it has been in use, if it is not in the Ne[illegible] Testament. And whether it is there or not may be know[illegible] by those who are pleased to read it with care: as all may, i[illegible] Protestant countries, where the Bible lies open, to be see[illegible] and read by all men." Postscript I. to "A Letter on th[illegible] Logos.")

Weak and almost incredibly insufficient as is the *scriptura*[illegible] evidence for a third Person in the godhead, the *theologica*[illegible] evidence is still weaker and more arbitrary; and betrays mos[illegible] fully those inadequate conceptions of the divine nature whic[illegible] form the supports of all the popular creeds and churches [illegible] You are aware of the Trinitarian argument for the necessit[illegible] [illegible] a *second* person in the godhead; for these orthodox theolo[illegible] [illegible] presume to reason upon abstract principles about the [illegible] of God to an extent that the Unitarians whom they [illegible] for this very practice never have approached to [illegible] indeed we hold to be arbitrary and presuming to

the last degree. We are gravely told by divines who profess the utmost humility and a horror of all speculation, that if God was one Being in the sense that we are one, He would have no resources in his own Nature enabling Him to forgive Sin; and that if there were not at least two persons in the godhead, the one to make atonement and the other to receive it, our Father in Heaven would be placed in these circumstances,—either He must forgive, and since his Law had been broken without the infliction of an adequate penalty, exhibit his Character without TRUTH; or He must refuse to forgive, and retaining his Truth, exhibit his Character without MERCY. Now when *a human reasoner* lays down these preliminaries as necessary parts of the constitution of the divine mind, I am amazed that he has ever after the conscience to charge other men with rash speculations on the subjects of Theology, or with reasoning upon abstract principles about the things of God. Atonement *is* made for every sin: in that the Trinitarian is right. The sinner bears upon a burdened soul the weight of the cross, and faints in sorrow. Through a crucifixion and an agony does every erring heart return to God. The penalty is paid in bitter shame and tears, in the consciousness of degradation and of eternal loss, in the deep humiliation of a spirit that has quenched within it the divine flame, and treated with no respect the image of God in which it was made. Can such a being sin and escape without atonement—can a spiritual creature darken the angel and cherish the animal, and yet pay no penalty, start at last with no horror, and throb with no remorseful agony? No—the sinner must die in his sins, if he is to escape the piercings of his better nature, the open eye of his conscience fixed in awful steadiness of gaze upon the terrors of his state. Who that has ever felt a throb of penitence, who that has ever known the prostration of a soul awakened to a sense of sin, the deep misery of the purer spirit looking sorrowfully on the debasements of our being,

as Christ looked upon Peter, who that has ever felt these things will deny that sin, every sin, has its atonement, and instead of questioning the *vicarious* sacrifice as too dreadful, will not rather put it away from him only as too easy, too little to remove from the sense of individual agony and burden to meet and satisfy the inward and untransferable reality? We blame not the Trinitarians for speaking of the atonement required by sin. We blame them for not treating that subject with sufficient strictness, with sufficient severity, with sufficient energy of application to individual consciences. How much more awakening it is to tell a man of the atonement that he pays within, of the cross that is laid upon his humiliated heart, than to tell him of a metaphysical necessity in God's nature that required the death of an infinite being, the blood of God, for this awful expression is used and defended at Christ Church,* to make satisfaction for the offence of a finite creature. This is the arbitrary assumption of Trinitarianism that requires most to be exposed, that the sin of a finite being is an infinite quantity, and that his penitence cannot atone for it, for his penitence is not infinite. Now the men who assert this strange thing, should at least be cautious how they charge Unitarians with arbitrary reasonings and speculations. Can Reason exhibit, or does Scripture any where say, that the sin of finite man is infinite in the sight of God, and yet unless this most extravagant of all propositions can be established the whole Trinitarian Theology falls to the ground, for then the only atonement for sin will be the crucifixion of the erring and repenting spirit, and none more dreadful can be given or conceived. I am perfectly aware that cautious and refined controversialists would not assert the infinite character of man's sinfulness, and that they would explain away the doctrine of the Atonement; but the Lecturers at Christ Church are not cautious controversialists, they have no no-

* See the Rev. Mr. Buddicom's Lecture.

tion of such refinements, and they do assert it without abatement. If God's unity, says one of them,* was like man's unity, He could not forgive, yet preserve His holiness. And therefore I suppose, since man has no tri-personal resources in his unity, that *he* can forgive only because his holiness is of an imperfect kind, and as his holiness becomes more strict he will less readily forgive, so that when he becomes quite perfect he will be quite implacable. But perhaps the Trinitarian *resource* in this difficulty, is that *man* too forgives, yet keeps his truth and holiness, in consideration of the atonement offered for all sin. The immoral plea that man is not the *Lawgiver*, cannot be offered by those whose difficulty is one respecting holiness. A holy mind is as much bound by the laws of holiness, as if it was itself the Lawgiver.

I have introduced here this arbitrary, metaphysical, and unscriptural speculation, employed by the Trinitarians to establish, *a priori*, the necessity of a second person in the godhead, only to prepare you for a similar mode of reasoning which is applied to prove the necessity for a *third* person in the godhead. There are works, they say, carried on in the soul of man, that require a Third Person, another infinite Mind in the godhead. Solemnly we say that this is making too free with the infinite nature of God. What are those works, or what works can be conceived, to which God our Father is not adequate? Is it not very like irreverence for a human being to say,—*my* salvation cannot be carried on by one infinite and perfect Spirit, but requires three infinite and perfect Spirits? Ought not such conclusions of Reason as these to be very distinctly supported by Revelation before they are advanced with any boldness, and other men called no Christians, and treated accordingly, for no other iniquity than that of humbly refusing to speak so confidently of God's nature, and to put these limitations upon Him without proof? But even supposing that the orthodox reasonings

* The Rev. H. M'Neile.

about the nature of sin were correct, and the inability of one perfect mind to forgive his creatures, and rescue a sinner from his sins, established, what necessities remain that require the existence of a *third* infinite Mind—what operations within the human soul are to be carried on, for which God the Father and God the Son are not sufficient? I know nothing more wonderful than that the Christian world should at this day admit the existence of a third person in the godhead, without ever raising the question, or having the doubt suggested to them, is not God our Father *sufficient* for these things? I intreat you to discard from your minds the Trinitarian assertion that we deny the operations attributed by them to the Holy Spirit—we do not deny them—the connexions of the Spirit of God with the spirit of man we hold as the most solemn, intimate and blessed truth, the very soul of worship, of hope, and of spiritual life—take away this, and religion has neither power nor meaning—but we do deny that the Spirit of our Father is insufficient to maintain every spiritual connexion with the souls of his children; we bring the secret griefs, penitence, and aspirations of our being to Him who heard the prayers and strengthened the soul of Christ;—and when light descends upon us, so that we almost hear the encouragements of His voice, and see the beckonings of His hand, we know that it is the Spirit of our Father who sends the blessing from above, and gives to them that ask.

We entreat Trinitarians to address themselves to this particular point, and to explain to us the moral or metaphysical necessities that require a third person in the godhead, and render two perfect and infinite Minds inadequate to the work of Man's Salvation. They are very explicit and full in their statement of *reasons* exhibiting the incompetency of one infinite spirit to save a sinner, and necessitating the introduction of a second—we ask them to be equally explicit in explaining to us the inadequacy of *two* BEINGS, each of them

possessed of the full perfections of godhead, to rescue, teach, comfort, and bless, that not naturally unkindred spirit of man, which Scripture tells us is 'the candle of the Lord,' and 'the inspiration of the Almighty.' It will not serve the Trinitarian theologians to refuse us this explanation on the grounds that they take the doctrine as it is revealed, and inquire no further—for they *do* enter into very copious explanations of the theological necessity for a *second* person in the godhead, and they very confidently state it as a fact in divine metaphysics, that if the resources of God could not have supplied two infinite minds, no sin could ever have found a pardon—and if after this readiness of explanation respecting the second person they refuse us all explanation respecting the third, the conclusion will certainly be suggested, that they offer no explanations only because they have none to offer. Conceding for a moment the fundamental principles of Trinitarian theology, that the Father of our spirits could not receive the penitence of His children and shed His blessing upon their returning hearts, until forgiveness was rendered possible by a co-equal and co-eternal God meeting the demands of a Righteousness that, if dwelling in only one perfect Mind, could not pardon;—what is there I ask *after* the sacrifice of Christ had removed the difficulty, and opened the communication between God and his children, and left the divine spirit free to love, and operate upon, the justified,—what is there remaining to restrict the workings of the Omnipotent and Omnipresent Spirit of God our Father—to render him incompetent for our sanctification, in addition to the previous incompetency for our redemption, which Trinitarians are so far from scrupling to assign to Him that they make it a first principle of their theology, and attempt to prove it by Reason.

Our One God they tell us, in the human sense of oneness, would be a helpless Being: on their very first sin, his children would be plucked out of His hands, and find him a God

unable to save. Or, if He could forgive the repentance of His creatures, it would imply a Morality so lax, that He would be a God not worth serving.* To such dizzy heights of Theology do Trinitarians who abjure Reason in religion carry their reasonings upon the nature of God, and look into the dread profound, and speak confidently, as if they understood it all. Again I say, let us grant them all this, and still the question remains that never has been answered, after the sacrifice of Christ has set at liberty the Spirit of our Father to come freely into loving, regenerating, and sanctifying contact with the spirits of his children, what necessity is there for a *third* person in the godhead to bless and save our souls, or what works are to be carried on *within* us, which God the Father and God the Son are not competent to perform? Has not the spirit of our Father access to His children, who are brought nigh to Him through Christ; and if so, what is the office and what the need of a third infinite Mind? We acknowledge with all our soul's devotion that every thing good in man comes, yes, and comes immediately, from the Spirit of our God; but is not our Father with us, and is His Spirit straitened that he cannot save? On this matter we abide with the Apostles who say:—"Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." We are told that the Holy Spirit uses 'the word,' as its instrument, in the work of spiritual regeneration. If so, the Holy Spirit must be God our Father, for the Apostle goes on to say:—"Of his own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures." "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and

* The Rev. H. M'Neile's Lecture.

work."* Now here, whilst no mention whatever is made of the Holy Spirit as a separate agent, the peculiar offices of the Comforter are ascribed to the spirit of our Father, and, what to Christians is equivalent, the spirit of Christ, for who hath seen *him*, hath seen all that man can see of the moral perfections and spirit of our God. And not with Apostles only, but with Christ himself, do we abide in the blessed faith of our Father being our Comforter. "Holy Father, keep, through thine one name, those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are. While I was with them in the world I kept them through thy name:—I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." Here Christ prays to God the FATHER to sanctify the spirits of the disciples, when *he* should be no more with them to instruct and keep them. Now Sanctification is assigned by Trinitarians to the Holy Spirit as his peculiar office. What then can be more clear than that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of our Father in communication with his children, and that this was the Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, a portion of the true spirit of God, which the Christ prayed his Father to communicate to his darkened disciples,—to take away the Jewish veil from their hearts, and to guide them into the blessed light of the pure gospel!

The Apostles pray to the Father to be a GUIDE† and COMFORTER‡: Jesus Christ prays to the Father to be a Sanctifier and Enlightener; these are the works, and *the only works*, ascribed by Trinitarians to the Holy Spirit. No reason has been offered in the present Controversy for the necessity of a third person in the Godhead to be the agent of these operations; nowhere in orthodox theology have I been able to find a reason: I respectfully invite the attention of our opponents

* 2 Thess. ii. 16. † 1 Thes. iii. 11. ‡ 2 Thes. ii. 16.

to this neglected point. Let them not mistake our demand. We do not deny that the works of the Holy Spirit can be done by God alone: but we ask for a reason why God our *Father* is not sufficient for these things. Until this question is satisfactorily answered, it must be evident that the Trinitarian Theology is entirely arbitrary.

It is not a little remarkable that Bishop Sherlock, in attempting to prove that the Holy Spirit performs the work of the Gospel *within* the mind, by the very texts that he himself adduces identifies this Holy Spirit with the Spirit of God our Father; "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him." "No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." "He that is *of* God, heareth God's word."*

There was only one of the operations ascribed to the Holy Spirit by the Lecturer in Christ Church, to which I could not give my assent. We were told that the Holy Spirit interpreted the Scriptures to all true believers. I believe that some portion of the Spirit of God is in every man who loves the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. I believe that every one who does His will, knows of the doctrine whether it is of God. Morally and spiritually, I do believe that the Spirit of God is still a witness to the truth of Christ. The Spirit of the Father was in Christ, and to those who love him and keep his commandments the Father still cometh, and maketh His abode with them. And so far we know that we are of the truth, because we love and are partakers of the Spirit that dwelt in Jesus. But if any man presumes to extend this sympathy with the Spirit of the Christ from moral to *controverted* truth, and to pretend that he is not only spiritually but intellectually instructed, so that he has not only a living faith, but a true creed, we abandon him to his conviction, satisfied that how-

* Sacred Classics. Sermons on the Holy Spirit, p. 161. I have lately read this volume carefully, in the hope of finding some definite statement of argument *for the* Trinitarian Theology on this subject, but in vain.

ever sincere, it is unscriptural and a delusion. How can men persuade themselves that it is humble, that it is Christian, that it is in the spirit of a modest self-knowledge, to pretend to this intellectual infallibility, that God not only inspires the holiness of their wills, but protects their judgment from all error? When we ask those who tell us that only *their* creeds can save, what infallible interpreter preserves *them* from all doctrinal error, they do not scruple to proclaim that the Spirit of God is their instructer in the controverted tenets of theology.* Now we only ask how this can be made clear either to other men, or to themselves? Have they alone sincere convictions on these subjects? Have they alone sought the truth with the toils and prayers of earnest and humble minds? Have they alone emptied themselves of all prejudice, and desired only the pure light from God? Have they alone put worldly considerations from their hearts, and left all things that they might follow Christ? What evidence is there in their position, or in their sacrifices, that only the Spirit of God can be their guide, for that they are manifestly self-devoted to the cause of truth? Are *they* the meek adherents to persecuted principle, so that against the outward storm nothing short of the inward witness of the Spirit can be their omnipotent supports? Do they alone give evidence by the scorn and insult which they cheerfully bear for Christ's sake and the gospel's, that they must be taught of God, for that no men could endure this social persecution unless God was with them? Ah, my friends, does it become the followers of popular opinions to turn to the persecuted, and say, *we* who float upon the world's favour, we who have no sacrifices to bear for conscience' sake, we to whom godliness is a present income (πορον) of all that men most love—we give evidence of being supported through all this peace and popularity by the Holy Spirit—but *you*, whom we persecute and scorn, you whom we lecture and libel, you who have to bear upon your

* See the Rev. J. E. Bates' Lecture, and the Preface to the Rev. Fielding Ould's.

inmost hearts the coarse friction of intolerance and of rude fanaticism, you, though you have to endure all this, give no evidence that your convictions of Christ and your faith in God are dear unto you,—you are voluntary sufferers, and the distresses of your position, which we shall aggravate in every way we can, are no proof that you stand the rude peltings of the pitiless storm, only because you dare not abandon conviction, or turn away from what you believe to be the light of God within you? I ask can any thing surpass the unmitigated Popery of all this, except its unmitigated cruelty and injustice? How is it that the Minister of a state religion, the preacher of popular creeds, whose lightest words raise echoes of assent—who gets the support and sympathy of crouds on far easier terms than others get bare toleration and existence, can so remove from him all self-knowledge and mercy, as to have the heart to tell the man whom he persecutes, *we* who have every thing to gain from our religion and nothing to lose, give evidence of being supported through all this ease and triumph by the Spirit of God, but you, who in this world have every thing to lose by your religion, and nothing to gain, give no evidence of having the Spirit of Truth, and are lovers of your own selves more than of Conscience and of God?* We suspect them not, God forbid we should, of being immorally tempted and biassed, and with a true sincerity we declare that we have no sympathy whatever with the ungenerous vulgarity of such a charge,—but at the same time, they ought to be aware, and if they were truly generous in their turn they would be aware, that all the *outward* marks by which men may judge of the sincerity of convictions, and the strength of inward reliances, and allegiance to God, are upon *us*, not upon them.

The other offices assigned to the Holy Spirit besides that of being an infallible interpreter to the orthodox, were the

* See the Lecture of the Rev. D. James, and indeed the whole tone and spirit the Trinitarian Course. Mr. James declared that we denied the personality of Holy Spirit, only because we had never *felt* his operations.

following:—to bring our souls into sympathy and union with the Spirit of Jesus—to draw us by spiritual affinities unto the Christ; to sanctify our nature through communion with the holy One, cleansing the temple of the spiritual God; to govern our moral being, and supply the diviner impulses that lift us to imperishable things, and teach us to love and to pray aright; and to give us through the spiritual witness within ourselves, a pledge and earnest of the loving purpose of God, and of the glory that remaineth.—Must we indeed renounce these connexions of our spirits with the Spirit of our God, unless mechanically settling the distribution of offices, we receive these influences through the departmental arrangements of the Trinitarian Theology? Will God our Father not come to us and make His abode with us, if we are unfortunate enough to find no evidence in Scripture for a third infinite Mind associated with him, and carry up to Him the unbroken sum of our love, our faith, our worship, and our prayers? Will He reject us only because we pour out our all before Him, and knowing Him to be all-sufficient, feel our derived spirits to be at every moment within the shelter of His parental presence?—And yet, if the Trinitarians were right, if only a believer in a tri-personal God could hold these spiritual connexions with the source of all good, the fountain head of all holiness and hope, if these were the only conditions on which our souls could feel life from above—then should we become the most grateful, the most devoted, the most submissive of their disciples—we would entreat them to show us the way of knowledge, that we might ascend unto the hill of the Lord, and stand in His holy place,—and to lift up for us, in mercy, the everlasting doors of our darkened hearts, that the King of Glory might come in;—and we would flee from our Unitarianism as we should from Atheism, for it would be Atheism if it closed our access to the Spirit of God.

But, though not fond of speaking personally of religious experiences, we do declare, and we do know, that the spirit of man

may hold communion with the Spirit of our Father. Every impulse after holiness is the Spirit of God. Every "sighing that cannot be uttered" after the pure, the perfect, and the good, is the Spirit of God. Every devotion of our souls to things unseen and eternal, when solicited by things seen and temporal, is of the Spirit of God. Every dictate of Duty is the spirit of God. Every answer to the prayer of a pure heart is the spirit of God. Every movement of disinterested love is the spirit of God. Every self-sacrifice for the sake of justice or of mercy is made in the strength of the Spirit of God. Every inward hope in this world's darkness, and undying trust amid this world's deaths, is an inspiration from Him who is a very present help in the time of trouble, a spiritual intimation from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. The spirit that conforms itself to the will of God, that removes from it whatever is alien to His nature, that puts away the defiling breath of the passions, that seeks Him by prayer, by efforts of duty, by struggles of penitence, by resistance to all sin, by self-purification and constant converse with His image in the Christ, that spirit mirrors more and more of the glory of God, feels more and more His power and peace within the soul, and receives of His fulness, and grows in His likeness, throughout eternity.

If there are any to whom all this appears visionary, and who charge the religious mind with mysticism,—we are ready to bear our share of that charge; for thus far we confess ourselves to be Mystics. Yet, so far are we from holding it to be Mysticism, that we are confident that nothing which sense perceives, or thought takes in, is so real, so enduring, so full of life, as this spiritual and imperishable connexion of the soul of man with the Spirit of God. This connexion, whatever may have been the inspiration of peculiar times, we now regard as part of the established providence and operations of our Father's Spirit. He gives of His Spirit, to all who observe the conditions on which

He has promised to pour out His Spirit upon them. No pure mind ever sought Him in vain. No erring heart ever turned to Him in penitence, and found no peace. Whenever our holier nature awakes to earnest action, God enters into the soul. Whenever prayer purifies our desires, and rectifies our estimates, and places great realities in spiritual lights, God is present with us. Every effort to sink our imperfections, and to feel purely, places us within the affinities of His Holy Spirit. There is no miracle in this. God reveals himself to the spirit that assimilates itself to Him, and seeks Him by growing like to Him. There are no limits to those spiritual communications. He that asketh receiveth; he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it is opened. This is of God's grace; not now of miracle, but of nature. We are His children, and in proportion as we love Him purely, and follow after Him, He reveals Himself to us. Revealing himself through our spirit, He abides with us for ever. Imaged within us in juster proportions, as we reject impurity, and impose the harmony of His will upon all our desires, He guides us into all truth, and causes us to feel within, the blessed intimations of His sympathizing Spirit. Correcting our false estimates, and fixing our trusts upon His own great realities, He comforts us amid the shadows of Time and Death, whilst we repose upon a world that cannot be moved, and rely upon the faithfulness of God.

Jesus Christ is our most perfect image of the Spiritual Father. He developes within us the ideas that are akin to God. He brings us through sympathy with himself within the affinities of the Holy Spirit, for God was with him. By the baptism of ever fresh penitence, and still fresher purity, he prepares us for the higher baptism of the Holy Spirit, and of fire. We grow in light as we grow in purity. If we keep holy the Temple of the Spirit it abides with us, and, doing His will, we know of the doctrine whether it be of God. The soul that quenches not the Spirit, that suffers no

intimation from God to pass unheeded, that looks upon the face of Christ, and reads in characters of blended grace and truth the mind of the Father, is continually born again, and again, into new and still newer light, for the kingdom of heaven is a reaching forth unto things that are before; and he that is in Christ Jesus has within him a spring of life, and is ever a New Creature. And he is ever nearest to God who through purity and prayer has disposed his own spirit to receive light from the Holy Spirit of God, and waits and watches for fresh commuications from His unexhausted Christ.

Were another great Teacher to appear amongst us, were another Christ to come to us, and apart from the narrow technicalities of system, to unfold sublime and quickening views of the moral and spiritual world, where might we expect to find the kindred minds, that would most instantly recognize the voice of the Divinity, and upon whose ready sympathies the heavenly words would fall like sparks upon the fuel? Perhaps those who best understood what it is "to be born again" might not be of the number of the learned, the instructed, the Masters in Israel. It is certain that they would not be found among the adherents of unchanging systems—the Pharisees of the faith, who think that they *already* possess the absolute Truth imprisoned in creeds—and expect no new light to break forth upon their souls. The wind bloweth where it listeth—nevertheless its course is not uncontrolled—it has laws though we know them not—and where would the Spirit of God list to blow, if it was now breathing from the lips of some inspired man,—into what hearts would it find its way, and fan the latent affinities into the flame of spiritual life? Might it not again pass by the College of the learned, and the Temple of the Priest, and descend in living fire upon the poor man's soul? All that we can do is to look out for light—to expect it—to keep near through prayer and inward communion to Him who is its Fountain—to have the inward sentiments pure, the place of

the Spirit unsoiled, that if light should come into the world, it may not reject us as unworthy, finding no mirror for itself in our stained souls—and above all, never to be possessed with that infatuation of confidence, that blindness of sufficiency, that self-idolatry of the creature, which looks for no regeneration to descend upon it—and ignorant of its poverty, its error, and its want, asks with the young Ruler, "what lack I yet," or with Nicodemus, "How can a man be born again?" We may be born again, and again, if we will only lay ourselves out for it. The light will come if it is looked for. It will not open the closed eye that seeks no more illumination, but it will fall upon every expecting spirit. The only essential condition of being born again, is that the sincere heart, listening to God within, and reading the mind of His Spirit in Christ his image, remove from itself every moral disqualification, and lie in wait for light and truth. Wherever they are found, and whatever be their creed, the Spirit of God "*listeth*" to blow upon such minds.

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CREEDS

THE FOES OF HEAVENLY FAITH;

THE ALLIES OF WORLDLY POLICY.

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN

PARADISE STREET CHAPEL,

LIVERPOOL,

ON TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 1839.

BY

REV. HENRY GILES.

BEING THE TENTH OF A SERIES, TO BE DELIVERED WEEKLY, IN ANSWER TO A COURSE OF LECTURES AGAINST UNITARIANISM, IN CHRIST CHURCH, LIVERPOOL, BY THIRTEEN CLERGYMEN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

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1839.

LECTURE X.

CREEDS THE FOES OF HEAVENLY FAITH; THE ALLIES OF WORLDLY POLICY.

BY REV. HENRY GILES.

"LET EVERY MAN BE FULLY PERSUADED IN HIS OWN MIND."—*Rom.* xiv. 5.

THE essential spirit of the religious revolution which in the 16th century shook Europe and its thrones, was resistance to ecclesiastical authority. When Luther burned the Pope's bull, in Wirtemberg, in one act pregnant with meaning and with consequences, he broke the spell which had chained the minds of men for a thousand years, and spread its fascination over the whole space of Christendom. That single act was a virtual denial that any church, however high in pretension, however venerable in institutions, however universal in dominion, however mighty in power, had a right to enslave his intellect or to silence his conscience. The English martyr, when ready to be offered up, boasted to his fellow-sufferer that they would that day kindle such a flame in England as should never be put out; but the blaze of a piece of parchment in the hand of the German reformer, was a light far more significant and impressive—a light at which thousands started from their slumbers, and although it has often since flickered and been clouded, it does yet, and ever will, point the way to mental and religious freedom. Luther and the other reformers, objected to the church of Rome, the usurpation of unjust authority, and the establishment of a false

standard in faith and practice: they objected to her that she claimed a dominion over the souls of men which God alone can hold; and they object that she set aside the supremacy of Christ by encumbering his gospel with her own traditions. Not alone for alleged errors in doctrine, but for this error in the very root and foundation of her constitution, they separated from her communion, and protested against her jurisdiction. They declared the Bible to be the only ground of a Christian's faith—the only guide of his religious convictions, and they claimed for themselves the right of private judgment and of individual interpretation. We make the same declaration and assert the same claim, and we neither restrict nor nullify it by creed, catechism or confession, by tests or articles, by pains or penalties. Modern Protestant churches, like the reformers, speak proudly of religious liberty, but like the reformers also, it is a liberty they are very unwilling to share—a liberty for themselves and not for others: without claiming infallibility in name, they assume it in reality; and without giving, as Rome does, the promise of unerring guidance, they aim at an authority as despotic, and would wrest a submission as slavish.

The energetic maxim of Chillingworth, "The Bible and the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants," is ever and ever repeated even by those who are pledged to find in it the Athanasian creed and the thirty-nine articles, and by others who are compelled to extract out of it the Westminster confession and the longer catechism. With a zeal that never grows fatigued, it is translated in every tongue and circulated in every nation; nay, the lisping child must have it to the very letter, and a fierce war-cry is opened should a school, by selections or omissions, leave the youthful mind without an opportunity to study the patriarchal genealogies, the prophesies of Daniel, or the apocalypse of Saint John. The wide circulation of the Bible we regard as a great social blessing; but when it is sometimes asked,

whether its indiscriminate reading is suited to all ages and classes, the very question is taken as an evidence of popery or infidelity in the proposer. To doubt the perspicuity of God's word, is is said, is to doubt the wisdom of God's providence. The first object of man in speaking to man, is to be understood; how much more in God addressing his creatures, and on the most momentous concerns! The Bible, it is asserted, is so plain that the child may understand it, that he who runs may read, and that way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein. If this be true, it is in itself the death-blow of creeds, for then they are both unnecessary and absurd—unnecessary, because the statements can be as clearly, can be as easily found in the Bible as in the creed; absurd, because it is monstrous folly to attempt making that more distinct which is manifest enough already. The Bible being, on the orthodox theory of plenary inspiration, literally the word of God, there is even a degree of impiety in the presumption of pretending to give a summary of its meaning in human fabrications, whether from Trent or Augsburgh, from the palace of the Lateran or the hall of Westminster.

That simplicity is a characteristic of the Bible, at least in its main tendency, I cordially admit; it is the especial quality of the gospel. I could desire no better test by which to try the value of creeds. If the evangelists John or Matthew were again to appear on earth, bringing with them their first simplicity, ignorant of the wrangling disputes, of the vain scholasticism which have disturbed this world and the church since they were taken to their rest—if the Athanasian document were put into their hands, there is nothing in their gospels which enables me to think they could understand it; if moreover they were told that the whole of it could be deduced from their writings, I speak in all earnest solemnity when I say, that at such an assertion I can conceive of them as no otherwise than utterly bewildered and surprised.

Take our Lord's sayings and discourses as reported by his evangelists, and contrast them with the creed we are discussing. With what undisguised simplicity is God ever spoken of, always presented in some intimate relation to our duty or his own providence—as an object of worship, of trust, or of love! Pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. If ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him. Touch me not for I have not yet ascended to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. Such is the clear and touching phraseology in which Christ always speaks of God, and thus gives, not a scholastic dissertation, but a revelation to human affections. And in the same spirit of simplicity is his own nature also manifested; he who in all things was meek and lowly in heart, who went about doing good, and came to seek and save the lost. Astonishing mysteries indeed has Athanasian theology made out of these plain statements, having found in them a trinity in unity, and a unity in trinity; the Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate; the Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible; the Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal, and so on; and though each is distinctively asserted to be uncreated, incomprehensible, and eternal, we are to believe on pain of eternal damnation, that they are not three eternals, but one eternal—not three uncreated, but one uncreated—not three incomprehensibles, but one incomprehensible. Surely of all incomprehensibles this theological jumble is the most incomprehensible. If to defy contradiction by the very sublime of absurdity be a safeguard from refutation, the Athanasian creed must stand eternally unconfuted. Plausible falsehood, however ingenious, may be stripped of its sophistries, but there is a certain degree of wild fabrication which may challenge all the

efforts of philosophers and logicians, yet remain as firm as before in the bulwarks of its impenetrable nonsense. It may be truly said that these are things on which we cannot reason; most certainly they are, for they subvert at once all possible principles of reason and of truth. But the climax of these astounding marvels is, that we are assured that if we do not hold this Catholic faith, "without doubt we shall perish everlastingly." And this precious document, this compilation of monkish mysteries and scholastic jargon, is set forth as the accurate definition of the Christian faith—the test of saving belief or of damnable heresy; this production of crazy or crafty churchmen, this concentration of hoary absurdities, of bewildered metaphysics, and of savage bigotries, presumes to utter the judgment of God, and to launch the thunder of the skies. Beginning with the pride of infallibility, it closes consistently with a sentence of perdition; and for this there is pleaded the language of the gospel—language evidently misinterpreted, as any language must be which would identify the spirit of Christ with the spirit of Athanasius. So on the ground of two false assumptions, those who pride themselves in this Athanasian orthodoxy are privileged to denounce with a safe and quiet conscience perdition on their heretical brethren. First, it is assumed that when the gospel says, "He that believeth not," it must mean, he that believeth not the three creeds; and, secondly, it is assumed that when the gospel says, "He that believeth not shall be condemned," the condemnation implied is everlasting destruction. This is in the genuine spirit of Church and Creed Christianity, fencing in a little and a barren paradise with the brambles and the briars of theological definitions, making holiness and virtue dependent on ecclesiastical syllogisms, and shutting out all from heaven who may be compelled to disagree with the doctors of Nice, or the compilers of our English liturgy, who hold the faith of Milton and Locke, but cannot be convinced by Bull, Waterland, or

Sherlock. Creeds pronounce perdition, and Churches hold up Creeds; and ministers come forth to magnify the glory of these Churches and to maintain the verity of these Creeds but men of meek tempers and tolerant hearts seem half ashamed of their work, and in the effort to soften dogmatical ferocity, make a vain effort at compromise between their consistency and their charity. It is all fruitless: the dark and damning malediction is written on these Creeds with a pen of adamat; the preacher's feelings are of no avail, and he is commanded by his system to proclaim them aloud and afar—to hold them as warrants of eternal death to all who gainsay or deny them. At the best, orthodox charity, after all admissions, can only embrace different shades of Trinitarians; Unitarians must still remain outside the pale of hope; if therefore condemned we must be, it is of but small importance in what form or on what theory. To those who are to enter the regions of the lost for ever, questions on essences and persons, with many other most grave disquisitions, can signify but little; nor can much consolation be derived from the reflection, that but a hair's breadth from the Unitarian heresy, theology by evasions and distinction might have given us a refuge in the doctrine of Sabellianism. We are, however, most gravely told that he who receives not the Athanasian Creed, cannot be saved—a Creed at which reason, as it was well said, stands aghast, and Faith itself is half confounded; a Creed, of which it was better said, that it is alike contrary to common sense, to common arithmetic, and to common charity.

Were the exposure of the Athanasian formulary the design of this Lecture, I should feel that I had undertaken a very needless and a very presumptuous task, needless, because in this age there are few that attach any importance to it; presumptuous, because, if minds are not affected by its self-confutation, I have not the vanity to pretend to any arguments which could shake their convictions. But one can scarcely

suppress a feeling of sorrow and surprise at seeing this document dragged out for defence in the nineteenth century; this mixture of monkish metaphysics and scholastic bigotry, a production which multitudes of the orthodox themselves conspire to repudiate, and of which many of the best and highest minds in the Church of England have been most heartily ashamed—of which they desire to be well rid. Were the defence of such a creed to be taken as a true sign of the times, there would be cause indeed for pain to think that we had been rolled back again into the dark ages; but it is not so; such things are rather marks that show us how far the advancing tide has moved beyond them. In the course of the present Lecture I desire it to be distinctly understood, that I oppose creeds in their very principle: it is not alone such as I think false, but though I believed them true, I would yet oppose their use. My opposition is directed against the spirit of creeds, and if my own opinions were attempted to be forced in that form, my opposition would be the same. I am in this place to maintain a principle, the principle of intellectual, moral, and Christian freedom, and because creeds, as I think, are at variance with this, I denounce them. I intend nothing against individual professors. If I should give them offence, I have no wrong motive with which to charge myself, and must attribute it to the necessity of plain speaking on a subject by no means agreeable; but whether pleasant or not, I have a duty to perform, and I must as far as my power goes, endeavour to do it honestly and faithfully.

The title of this Lecture is, that creeds are the foes of heavenly faith, and the allies of worldly policy. It is my object to show that this accusation is not lightly or unjustly advanced; and in making good this two-fold charge, the greatest perplexity which attends it, is the multifarious and abundant evidence whereby it can be established.

I. I proceed first to prove them the foes of heavenly faith.

Creeds disqualify the mind for the pursuit of truth. This is my first assertion, and I shall establish its correctness in several particulars. Creeds generate mental apathy and mental dependence, and this is fatal in the very outset. To a spirit of inquiry there is needed an impulsive intellectual activity, and to this activity there is needed a desire for the thing to be attained, and a sense of its importance. There is no labour without motive, and if in religious belief, the creed has defined before-hand all that is necessary for my salvation, I have no necessity to take any more trouble in the matter. If I am to rest on authority at last, it is just as well for me to be satisfied with it at first—if after toilsome inquiry, at the peril of my soul's eternal peace, the dogmas of the creed are those to which my conclusions must return, I had better be at once content—if I must believe as the Church believes, if I must believe as the Creed says I should believe, if I must believe as the priest declares my hope of heaven requires, if after criticism and research, long and patient, I must arrive at but one exposition of the Bible, it is but wisdom to spare myself from such a pressure of useless labour. But indolence in this case is not merely allowable, it is, in fact, the safest. If to doubt be danger, and if to disbelieve be sin, then the curiosity which stimulates examination may lead me into ruin, whilst implicit submission, that receives all and questions nothing, is a condition of peaceful security. The incitements to mental labour are analogous to those to any other sort of labour; it is that one shall be the richer and the better for it, and that what he acquires he may justly possess. But, if by independent inquiry I may become morally poorer and spiritually worse, if I shall have no right to my own thoughts, and must be despoiled of my convictions, or punished for them, when I have worked them out

with the struggle of every faculty, it is exceeding folly to risk the misery and irritation of being torn between my opinion and my creed, conscience forcing me to acquiesce, and reason compelling me to doubt. This view is no supposition; it is fact. Submission to Creeds and Churches, is the true cause of that wide spread moral torpor in every country where Creeds and Churches have dominion. There is nothing so rare as intelligent, independent religious conviction; and how can it be otherwise, when each leans upon his priest, and the priest gives him ready-made opinions, as they were formed a thousand years ago. There is a general and profound ignorance of the sources of opinion, the history of opinion, of the philosophy of opinion, and of the Bible, both in its letter and in its spirit. Speak to multitudes of religion, in any broad or liberal sense, and it seems to them as if it were an unknown tongue. To have any chance of attention, you must use terms which Creeds have sanctified, you must address them in traditionary phrases, which have the sectarian or sacerdotal currency. This never could have been had religion been recommended as a subject of individual and independent study, leaving the mind free, both in its pursuit and its conclusion. That I have stated nothing but what fact justifies, I may appeal to any one who has considered the religious condition of this country, or of Europe generally, and considered it in every rank of society. I speak not of the Spaniard, who has not yet rid himself from the palsy of the Inquisition, who can go from the prostration of the confessional to scenes of the wildest crime; I speak not of the Italian, that compound of profaneness and credulity, of sin and devotion, who can bow before an image, and with the same hand cross himself, by which a minute before he plunged his stiletto in his fellow-creature's heart. I speak not of our own peasantry, who Sunday after Sunday, walk statedly to church or chapel, and know little more than that they went there and came back again; I speak not of the fashionable wealthy, who, on this point, are commonly as

ignorant as the boor, and choose religion as they choose eve thing else, as it happens to be the mode; I pass these l because it may be said, that pleasure and gaiety leave th no time for study; but I will refer to multitudes who are teemed devout and serious Christians, whose minds passiv receive the mould of their teachers, and to whom religi never presents itself as a system of various thought and independent examination. Now, this ignorant apathy h bad effects, which are not merely negative; and at the ri of anticipating, I will allude in a few words to one or two them: it gives stability to every error and corruption, a holds to them with an obstinacy, against which wisdom h no power; it is the very soil in which priestcraft gro darkest and foulest; and the hierarchy in any age or count has never risen to its full stature of lordliness, until the peo have lain lowest in torpid submission. And, in addition this, there is no uncharitableness so inveterate, there is bigotry so intolerant, as that which this species of charac matures, for as it is unable to comprehend an opposite opini it is equally inadequate and unwilling to weigh the argume in its favour, or to estimate the evidence on which it is ma tained. Having no conception of independence itself, in pendence in another appears presumption, if not somethi worse, and never having imagined that other opinions co possibly be true except its own, to hold any different co only be explained by supposing a want of honesty or a wa of grace.

I might dwell upon the fear by which Creeds paralyse t faculties of weak or sensitive natures, by which they depri them of all power for calm and deliberate examination, by t fear of being excluded from their Church, by the fear of bei discarded by their friends, by the fear of being cast into he above all these, by the fear of losing the favour of God, a the friendship of Jesus, and with right and true minds, th is the greatest of all fears. In the midst of so many terro

it is too much to expect that our weak humanity could be calm,—that it could look with unmoved heart at the appalling indications of so many and dire threatenings, it is like examining a man on the terms of his faith, while the officials of persecution are arranging the faggots or putting screws in the rack. From this topic, disagreeable in any shape, I pass on, and assert, that Creeds are enemies to truth, because, by preconception and prejudice, they disqualify the mind to seek or apprehend it. This is my second, and in this section, my last position.

The statement of the Church of England respecting the three Creeds, is this: that they "ought thoroughly to be received and believed, for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture."* The Catholic doctrine, with equal decision, asserts that the Infallibility of the Romish Church may also be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture. Suppose then a Church of England Christian with the Bible before him; he has been previously indoctrinated in the three Creeds, and these ideas pre-occupying his mind will so far influence his interpretation. Suppose a Roman Catholic in a like position; he has ever present to his mind the Infallibility of his Church, and *her* decisions must be the limits of *his* conclusions. Intellectually or morally, no position can be conceived worse than this for the pursuit or discovery of truth. The mind is biassed from the first; its calmness and its candour are subverted, and it is no longer a judge, but a partizan; it is not to decide on evidence, but, (to use a legal term) to act on the instruction of its brief. That Creeds have the tendency to distort and fetter the intellectual workings of the mind, we know from the fact, too palpable to need proof, that Theologians have always been the most obstinate in resisting the discoveries of science, and ever the last to yield. Astro-

* Art. 8.

nomy, in its glimmerings of scientific truth, was once Chu
heresy. A Father of the Church, as it is well known, d
denounced that man as infidel and profane who should d
to assert that the earth moved round the sun, and not t
sun round the earth. On the other side of this controver
we have been told that the arts and sciences have their co
pendiums as well as religion. It was a most unfortuna
analogy; for how would it have been now with art a
science, had Astronomy been made a Creed at the Coun
of Nice, and a confession on Chemistry been compiled
the Westminster divines. Galileo was pronounced a hereti
and the early Chemists laboured under strong suspicion
witchcraft. Had we been bound in Astronomy as we are
Theology, Joshua should be our authority, decisive and ir
vocable, and the calculations of Newton and Laplace shou
be placed in the index expurgatorius of Ecclesiastical dogm
tism. Even Luther himself, the author of the greatest
moral revolutions since Christianity, smiled at the idea th
the earth should move round the sun, and said, "that a
cording to Holy Scripture, Joshua commanded the earth
stand still, and not the sun."* Had not the progress
energy of human intellect been stronger, in what a positi
should we yet have been as to the true principles of the co
struction and motion of the universe? Geology as yet is
scientific heresy; and, to avoid the stigma, orthodox Ge
logists have been driven into all modes of eccentric explan
tion, some to disjoin the first verse of Genesis from all th
follows, and others to the supposition that a day may me
a thousand years, or if the speculator needs it, ten thousa
or a million. The intellectual immorality thus occasioned,
is not possible to estimate; for it is a coarse view of sin
place it altogether in the misdirection of the passions: c
tainly, the sins which ever afflicted mankind most, we

* Michelet, vol. ii. pp. 124, 125.

the moral perversions of the intellect. And this may be at once conceived if we have read the history of the Church, and are able to take a calm and impartial review of its cabals and controversies. I will not mention here the loss of kindly affections, the loss of charity, the loss of peace; I merely allude to the immense intellectual waste which has been occasioned by men setting out on their inquiries with a foregone conclusion. I shall say nothing on the tomes, enough to make a library as great as that the Turkish soldier burned, which have been written to defend the Trinity—I take an example to Protestants more grateful—I mean, transubstantiation. What was it that for centuries perpetuated a false and absurd philosophy in Europe? What was it that made Aristotle the supreme ruler of the Christian Church—not Aristotle, as he was, the philosoper, but as Churchmen used him, a verbal quibbler—was it not for the purpose of constructing syllogisms with orthodox exactness, and by theories on essences, species, forms, and so forth, to make it evident that under the appearance of bread and wine, the very God who created the heavens and the earth, and the very man Christ Jesus who died on Calvary, were virtually present? Go into any great library, and on this subject alone you may find volumes of which the very names are too many for memory. Yet, in these there is abundance of talent, of subtlety, and of acuteness—all in the travail to sustain a theory. No one can deny, no one will, who knows how equally the Creator scatters his gifts, that minds of the very highest order were amongst the schoolmen; yet all these magnificent powers were expended to sustain one or two absurd positions, enslaving their own intellect, and by their authority and their influence, enslaving the intellect of Christendom; and, from the reformation to this hour, there have been the same waste and perversion of thought. Just consider what tortuous logic, what wire-drawing ingenuity have been exercised to defend guilt by imputation, and righteousness

by imputation—absurdities as great morally, as transubstantiation is intellectually. This is the work of Creeds.

Dissenters are sometimes taunted with want of scholarship. The taunt may have foundation in fact; perhaps it has, but on what are we to place the blame? Dissenters, we presume, have a measure of intellect on the average of other men, and are gifted with as many mental faculties as those who subscribe the articles of our National Church. God does not distribute his blessings on the ground of subscription, however Universities may. The gifts of mind are equal and bountiful like the beneficence of creation. The same full hand that showers sunlight over hill and valley, that opens fountains in the rocks, and sows the wilderness with flowers, without reference to Sect or Church, impregnates all understandings with the elements of thought, and all fancies with the germs of beauty. The Dissenter, as the Churchman, hath eyes, hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections. If then this fair portion of our Maker's mercy be equally given, whence are we to trace the want of its proper cultivation? If the orthodox close the Universities against us by Creeds, draw fast the iron bolt by an iron theology, take away the key of knowledge, and repulse those that with all their hearts would enter, place before us tests which, if stupid enough, we might subscribe without understanding, and if dishonest enough we might subscribe without believing, but, candidly confessing we neither understand them nor believe them, therefore refuse to sign them,—where then is the magnanimity or the generosity which throws in our teeth, though it were true, that we have not the science of Cambridge, or the classicality of Oxford. Yet, despite of all restrictions, Dissent has had a goodly number of noble and cultured minds—minds able and honest, which, in the hour of need, even the Church herself was not ashamed to acknowledge, or ashamed to use.

Creeds act as mighty temptations,—as the very Satans of

theology;—and they are not temptations to the covetous and ambitious only, but also to the weak and good. When sects and Creeds are the standards of preferment, those with whom preferment is the great object, are made to add the sin of sanctimonious hypocrisy to that of Ecclesiastical covetousness and Ecclesiastical ambition. But there are others good in their own hearts, yet not mighty enough to be martyrs, whom Creeds keep in a whole life of agony. There are those who entered a religious community, believing its opinions most enthusiastically, who, by the further progress of intellect or judgment, may be brought to doubt or deny them. They are then driven to a desperate alternative, either to belie their conscience, or to do violence to their hearts. Take the case of many of the curates and incumbents of the Church of England. Suppose, that on receiving orders they assented to all the bishop or the Church prescribed, but that after years of thinking they were compelled to disbelieve the Athanasian Creed. They are then periodically reading, with the most serious tones, and from the most solemn place, a statement of doctrine which they conceive in their souls to be hideous and false, reading it as the conviction of their own judgments, and as that which ought to be the saving faith of all men. If the conscience is not utterly hacknied, if the religious sensibilities are not torn out from the heart, this must be continually as the torture of the rack. Like all human faculties, conscience has a limit; beyond a certain point it can endure no more, and so when bigoted exaction has stretched it to the last, it must revolt or expire. The alternative in the end is, moral apathy or theological rebellion—a quiescent hypocrisy, or an open opposition. But few can brave the contest, and they have no refuge except a tacit and unwilling submission. Honest men, it may be said, when they ceased to believe the doctrines they solemnly affirmed, would renounce them with a denial as public as their profession. It is easy to say this, but, even for honest men,

it is sometimes hard to do it. In the clerical order especially there are numbers, whose position has been attained by long study and weary toil—whose very means of life—not to speak of their station and their friendships—hang upon adherence to the Creed of their Church. What are these men to do? To dig they are not able, and to beg they are ashamed. Yet I can easily conceive that many could abandon rank and friendship, and count them light, in comparison with their faith, to conscience, that they could take a cell in the wilderness for their dwelling, quench their thirst at the running stream, and seek their food on the briar and the bramble, sooner than be false to their convictions, and do dishonour to the integrity of their souls. But it may be, that others with themselves are to suffer,—those whose lives are bound up in their lives,—those to whom they are the only earthly support and refuge, the wife, the child, the aged father, or the widowed mother,—whom to cast on the friendless world, were worse than a thousand martyrdoms. Think, then, of the poor curate of the Church of England, or the humble incumbent, who has grown long into life, with claims most pressing multiplying around him—one who once out of his pulpit knows not where to turn for the bread which his children crave—and we cannot judge harshly or uncharitably, if the power of his affections is too strong for the stern demands of duty. I know there have been those who could commit father, and mother, and wife, and children, to that good Provider who feedeth the raven and sheltereth the nest of the sparrow; who could speak the truth and take the consequences;—I trust there are those yet in the world who could do the same; but in this or any other age, martyrs must be few, and the spirit of martyrdom rare. We blame not too severely those who have not the highest courage of religious heroism, but we may condemn with honest indignation those institutions that by fencing their position with Creeds and Articles, compel them to be hypocrites. I do not apply these assertions to members or ministers of the Church of England,

or other Churches, individually, but any one who has studied the history of religion, or watched the tendency of institutions, knows that in the English Establishment, in the Romish, in all establishments that have been narrowly restrictive, the hypocrisy of ambition, or the hypocrisy of fear, has been deeply and abundantly nourished.

The Church does not deny a small amount of liberty—no Church can,—it will therefore allow you to read the Bible, if you desire it, but you must find nothing therein but what the Church proposes. In the study of the Sacred text, you must have always before your eyes the three Creeds and the thirty-nine Articles; find what these prescribe, and it is all the better for your peace and comfort; miss them, and you are open to social and spiritual condemnation. Churches which dictate creeds, use words without meaning, when they say, that you may read the Bible, for they tell you also, at the commencement, what you ought to find in the Bible. I shall give an illustration here of my meaning, by an extract from one of the Oxford Tract writers:—I know well that some object to these writers, but so far as I have been able to study the subject—and I have read, attentively or casually, the whole of what are called the Oxford Tracts,—I think their statements and their doctrines are entirely in the spirit of their system, and in most exact consistency with their asseverations and their Creed. There is no medium; we require an infallible tribunal, or we must have a free judgment; but the authorities of the English Establishment will give us neither; for with that we must encounter the twofold endurance of an erring Church and an enslaved understanding. I think, therefore, the Oxford doctors in most perfect consistency with their profession; and thus believing, I quote the following passage, illustrative of these writers, and of the spirit of Ecclesiastical authority in general. It is a portion of a dialogue between a minister and his parishioner. Not to spoil the dramatic effect of it, I shall give you a little more than absolutely belongs to my

subject. Thus speaks the Parishioner to the Pastor:—"My good mother, said he, not long before her death, said to me very earnestly, My dear Richard, observe my words: never dare to trifle with God Almighty. By this I understood her to mean, that in all religious actions we ought to be very *awful*, and seek nothing but what is right and true. And I knew she had always disapproved of people's saying, as they commonly do, that it little matters what a man's religion is, if he is but sincere, and that one opinion, or one place of worship, is as good as another. To say, or think, or act so, she used to call 'trifling with God's truth;' and do you not think so, (addressing himself to me,) that she was right?

"Indeed I do, said I.

"And, he said, I was very much confirmed in these opinions by constantly reading a very wise, and as I may say to you, a precious book, which a gentleman gave me some years ago, whom I met by chance as I was going to see my father, in the infirmary. It is called, 'A Selection from Bishop Wilson's Works,' and there are many places which show what his opinions were on this subject, and I suppose, Sir, there can be no doubt, that Bishop Wilson was a man of extraordinary wisdom and piety. Then, after a slight remark from his interlocutor, he observes, And what Bishop Wilson says is this, or to this effect, that to reject the government of bishops is to reject the ordinance of God. Having mentioned some controversy he had with a Dissenter, he observes, it seemed to me (and I told the man so,) like going round and round in a wheel, to say, that if he is God's minister, he preaches what is good, and if he preaches what is good, he is God's minister; for still the question would be, what is right or good? And some would say one thing, and some another; and some would say, there is nothing good or right in itself, but only as it seems most expedient to every person for the time being. So, for my own satisfaction, and

hoping for God's blessing on my future endeavours, I resolved to search the matter out for myself, as well as I could. My plan was this: First to see what was said on the subject in the Church Prayer Book, and then to compare this with the Scriptures. If, after all, I could not satisfy myself, I should have taken the liberty of consulting you, Sir, &c. Yours, replied this Rev. instructor to his prudent catechuman, was a good plan."

This passage contains the whole spirit of Creeds and Churches. Take the Prayer Book with you, keep the fear of the bishop before your eyes, and walk reverently in the way of the Articles. Then read the Scriptures if you will, but read them to show that all this is Holy Writ.

Creeds are, further, at enmity with truth, because they resist its development, and embarrass its progression. The world could never have advanced beyond a fixed point, had it been governed by Churchmen, in the true Church spirit. For what is it that Creed-makers so insanely attempt? They attempt what is alike inconsistent with the glory of truth and the nature of man. Truth is infinite, like its author, and they would confine it within the limits of the Nicene and Athanasian formularies. Truth is eternal and progressive, but Creeds would swear us to the worst barbarisms of the worst ages. Truth is discovered and carried onward by the independent working of free and various minds, but Creeds would reduce all to an apathetic uniformity; and had not truth been greater than Creeds, all that has been done for religion and science, would now be in eternal silence. Creeds not only thus retard the progress of Truth, by the sanction of authority, by the influence of prejudice, by the tenacity of habit; but give errors all but immortality. Creeds are foes to whatever is most heavenly in our nature; to conscience, in its rectitude, and to charity in its gentleness; to conscience by an utter perversion of the moral sense, making that to be guilt which is not guilt, and giving merit to that which deserves none, making it

righteous to believe one proposition, and sinful to doubt another, thus creating a factitious vice, and as often denying the evidence of real virtue; to charity, also, Creeds, I have said, are foes, and such they are by bitter exclusiveness, by wrong terms of communion and brotherhood, by dissension, by enmities and contentions, and by hatred in all its most odious shapes.

Creeds have failed in all the objects for which it is pretended they were made, and they have infinitely multiplied the evils against which it is pretended they are the guards. They are needful, it is said, for the preservation of the Faith, and instead of preserving the Faith, they have provoked the wildest unbelief; they are required, it is argued, as bonds of unity, and instead of this they have bred divisions and heresies without number; they are means, some will go so far as to say, of maintaining Christian peace, and instead of this they have rioted in wars and persecutions the most inhuman and the most sanguinary. The history of religion shows that unbelief is never so prevalent as when the Creed is most rigid. The countries and the times in which Theological ingenuity left least scope for the free play of intellect, have always been the country and times, when, under the outward guise of a uniform faith, there has been the most absolute contempt for the popular religion, as well as for Christianity in general. For the proof of this need I refer to the French Church, and the withering scepticism which it nurtured; the Spanish Church; the Italian Church; and to sustain the same principle we might likewise accumulate heaps of evidence from the Protestant Churches. As to heresies, the case is still more clear. One heresy may have called forth a Creed, but one Creed has produced a thousand heresies; and Creed-makers, when they imagined their work complete, to their sorrow have found it was but merely commenced. The history of heresies would be at once humiliating and instructive. In all varieties we have them on every point in religion, and

on all that has connection with it; on the nature of God. Men not satisfied with a simple trust, must speculate on the Divine Being—must ascertain whether he was essentially one, or numerically divided; Churchmen must define, and after much labour we have such a document as the Athanasian Creed, and such a doctrine as the Athanasian Trinity. On the nature of Christ, we have the same subtleizing process; we are tossed between Arius and Athanasius, and having got clear of these, we are again to be bandied between Nestorius and Eutychus, and to determine whether Christ's godhead and manhood were so united as to make one nature, or so divided as to constitute two natures; whether his divinity was not instead of a human soul, or in what relation his human soul stood to his divinity; whether he had one will or two wills; whether his death was a substitution or not; whether it was for the elect only, or for the whole race of man universally. On the Church; what its constitution, what its extent, what its authority; is it fallible or infallible; and if infallible, where does that infallibility rest; in the Pope, in a Council, in both together; in a congregation, or in every individual Christian? On the Sacraments; are there two or seven; what is their nature and efficacy; does baptism cleanse from original sin, or does it not; is it necessary to salvation or not? Roman Catholics affirm both, and so do the Oxford Tract writers. Is it to be consequent on personal belief or not; is it to be administered to infants, or to persons of mature years, and to be by immersion or by sprinkling? Again, we have a whole crowd of divisions and heresies on the Lord's Supper; are the elements actually changed into the substance of Christ, or is Christ merely present along with them, or is he spiritually, but not personally, present; is it a rite mystically effective, or is it merely commemorative? All these questions have been sources of endless division of opinion; even at the present hour, the Oxford divines teach a doctrine concerning the Eucharist, which it

requires marvellous perspicacity to distinguish from transubstantiation, while the Calvinistic evangelicals maintain views which might content the very lowest sacramentarian. But why speak of Creeds and Articles as means of religious unity, when the Church of England herself affords us the means of giving such assertion a flat denial? Within her pale, she has had men of all and opposite opinions—Arminian and Calvinist, Unitarian and Tritheist—every possible hue that orthodoxy could assume. Paley smiles at the idea, as one of most grotesque absurdity, that men should be thought to believe the articles they sign; they are, according to his morality, mere articles of peace, intended to exclude no one but Papists and Anabaptists. If this be true, a man might, as an able writer on non-conformity says, take a benefice with a good conscience from the Grand Turk. Nay, not to speak of believing the Articles, we have heard it asserted, in connection with the Universities, that the youthful subscribers are not supposed to understand them, or in some cases even to have read them. The Church of England is perhaps wise in not pushing matters too far, for in her former efforts to force uniformity, she lost the best of her sons by thousands; an event that she has cause to regret to the latest hour of her existence, and for which America should bless her for ever. The distinction between essentials and non-essentials, is one of the most quibbling of Theological vanities. Every one knows that each sect has its essentials and non-essentials, according to the compass of its Creed, some many and some few: with the Roman Catholic, Transubstantiation is as essential as the Trinity; he condemns the orthodox Protestant to perdition for not holding one as well as the other, whilst both combine to pass sentence on the unfortunate Unitarian who can receive neither. Again, I assert the distinction is petty and quibbling, for who is to fix it, where is it to stop; who is to decide it, and what are to be grounds of the decision? All things are important to us,

as they bear relation to our conscience or our convictions; one man eateth only herbs, another eateth all things; one man esteemeth one day above another, another esteemeth every day alike: let every man be persuaded in his own mind; that is the Apostle's view of the subject, and that is the true, the safe, the charitable one. Protestantism has not lessened or softened the number or the inveteracy of religious divisions infinitely more perplexed than Romanism in her views of religious authority, she has given importance to doctrines which the Church under that system scarcely noticed: such as grace, predestination, and other similar disputed theories: thus the sting of controversy has been added to topics that were before sufficiently repulsive in their dry and technical abstruseness. But it is pitiful, it is humiliating, not merely to our common Christianity, but to our common human nature, to see the arrogant assumption with which puny men decree what their brothers are to believe, now and in all future times, tying down the mind that should be free as heaven, as it is as progressive as it is eternal: putting themselves on the throne of God, and dealing judgment where he deals mercy. The minuteness of theological definition has surpassed all other efforts of human ingenuity, but it has not alone deadened the freedom of intellect, but also injured its honesty. On the Trinity, more especially, heresy has ever been treading closely on orthodoxy, "until, after revolving round the theological circle," as Gibbon says, "we are surprised to find that the Sabellian ends where the Ebionite had began." Each theological speculator has his own Trinity, his own exposition of the Athanasian mystery, until amidst the whirl of dogmatical contradictions, the mind grows giddy, and knows not where to rest. The Church of England, as I have observed before, has all systems between the extremes of Sherlock's Tritheism and South's Sabellianism: between the three infinite minds of the one, and the three *somewhats* of the other. The ancient Christians afforded full occasion for the caustic

description which Gibbon gives of their disputes, and the modern Christians have not grown wiser, or learned better. "The Greek word," he says, "which was chosen to represent this mysterious resemblance, bears so close an affinity to the orthodox symbol, that the profane of every age derided the furious contests which the difference of a single diphthong excited between the Homoousians and the Homoisians. As it frequently happens that sounds and characters which approach nearest each other, accidentally represent the most opposite ideas, the observation would be itself ridiculous, if it were possible to mark any sensible difference between the doctrine of the Semiarians, as they were improperly styled, and that of the Catholics themselves. The Bishop of Poictiers, who in his Phrygian exile, very wisely aimed at a coalition of parties, endeavours to prove, that by a pious and faithful interpretation, the Homoousian may be reduced to a consubstantial sense. Yet he confesses that the word has a dark and suspicious aspect; and, as if darkness were congenial to theological disputes, "the Semiarians who advanced to the doors of the Church, assailed them with the most unrelenting fury." If it be said, that the Creeds are not the creators of divisions, but that divisions are the creators of Creeds, I admit that they act and react on each other. If they create not the differences which they make, they give them all their bitterness. If it be said, that independently of Creeds, there would still be endless variety of private opinions, I grant it; I go further, and say, it were most desirable there should be such divisions. It is Creeds that infuriate religion, and turns dissent into dissension. A man who felt he could form his opinion in freedom, and hold it in peace, would never persecute another; would never hate another; would never pretend authority over another; he would give the liberty he used. It is the authority which Creeds pretend, that constitute one of their greatest evils. The ancient Church then had Creeds in plenty, but no unity; the Reformed Churches

are in the same position. If it be asserted they have agreement in essentials, I refer to what I have already said on this point; but if it be maintained that their difference is only in name, then, I say, the matter becomes worse, and plainly shows that Creeds, out of small disputes, can cause gigantic evils. Nothing could be more bitter than the Sacramentarian Controversy amongst the Reformers; nothing could be more vile than the language with which they assailed each other; nothing more furious than the invectives with which they pelted one another. Each would fix on his opponent what he did not believe himself; and yet there occasionally peeps out a glimmer, that they had some sense of their inconsistency. "It is of great importance," says Calvin, in writing to Melancthon, "that the least suspicion of the divisions that are among ourselves pass not to future ages; for it is ridiculous beyond all things that can be imagined, that after we have broken off from the whole world, we should so little agree among ourselves since the beginning of the Reformation." The charity of Calvin was not equal to his discretion, as we may see by this extract.

"Honour, glory, and riches," says he to the Marquis de Poët, "shall be the reward of your pains; but, above all, do not fail to rid the country of those zealous scoundrels who stir up the people to revolt against us. Such monsters should be exterminated, as I have exterminated Michael Servetus, the Spaniard."

In the same spirit is the language of Austin, who was Calvin's master, not only in his doctrine, but also in his zeal. "O, you Arian heretic," he says, "the thief knew him when he hung upon the cross; the Jews feared him when he rose from the dead; and you treat him with contempt, now he is reigning in heaven. Take care, beloved, of the Arian pestilence!" (Quoted from *Robinson's Ecclesiastical Researches*, pp. 348, and 181.)

Division and heresy are, in truth, innumerable, and the

ideas of stemming them by Creeds, is to imitate the peasant standing on the river's bank, and waiting until it should have all flowed by. "One doctor of the Lutheran Church," says Robert Robinson, of Cambridge, "hath given a comment on heresy and schism, and hath inserted no less than six hundred and thirty-two sorts of heretics, heresiarchs, and schismatics, diversified as the birds of heaven, and agreeing only in one single point, the crime of not staying in what is called the Church."

I have now shown that Creeds did not promote unity in the ancient Church; that they did not promote it in the Roman Church; that they did not promote it in the Reformed Church; that in the present day they do not promote it in any of the Protestant Churches; not to allude again to our own Establishment; to many in the Scotch Church, they are a dead letter; they are entirely so in the French and German Churches; and in the Genevese Church, the very school where blackest Calvinism was fabricated, the arena where the stern persecutor burned Servetus, Calvin's spirit is extinct, and his creed repealed. I have shown, then, that they never produced unity, and I believe the most intrepid Ecclesiastic will not affirm they have been favourable to Christian peace. Turn to the page of history; look abroad over the face of the world, and you have lamentable evidence of the charge. Creeds have broken the peace of Christendom, and given unwonted fury to all its strifes; Controversies have arisen without number, and have been maintained with fanatic zeal, fury, and detestation. What shame should the opposite conduct of Philosophers flash in the face of theologians, —men, who in quietness pursued their own studies, and left their results for the progressive amelioration of their species —whilst the janglings of Churchmen, wringing through every age, have been empty of all things but their enmity. Why is it, that we in this hour are not more profitably engaged,—why is it, that we are not rather seeking out the woes that

crush down humanity, and joining forces to remove them,—why is it with so much of what is positive to be done, so much of wretchedness to relieve, so much sin to remove, so many solemn claims on all sides of us, that when we think of it, we feel as if this were the veriest trifling; why are we thus in strife, when we might be in union; why are we compelled to say hard things, and to repel them? It is all to be charged to Creeds, which with the spirit of Cain, has risen the hand of brother against brother, and caused contention and an evil heart, where there ought to be charity and peace. It is all vain, it is not human nature, no matter how strongly disclaimed, to think, that polemical contention can be perfectly free from the wrong passions, and it is better not to pretend to meekness, when the opposite is frequently but too evident. The days of physical strife in religion, it is to be hoped, are gone; but upon the head of Creeds there is a blood-stain, a blood guiltiness, which the whole ocean could not wash out. Religion was made the watch-word for war; the cross was raised as the symbol of destruction, and the gathering of nations were around it, to carry ruin as a flood, ay, into those very scenes, where it once bore the dying form of him, who said, "I came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them." War, in its simplest utterance, is a word of horror; but religious war leaves nothing darker to be imagined. In worldly enmities, when the contest is deadliest, there are touches of human compunction; in the most sanguinary strife, the voice of mercy is sometimes heard, and the hand of help is given; fiercest opponents will occasionally be generous—the oppressed, in the hour of triumph, can be magnanimous to the tyrant in his fall, but place men against each other with different religious sentiments, unsheath the sword of the orthodox against the heretic, the heart becomes steel, the bosom becomes ruthless, and the man is lost in the fiend. Demand you evidence of this? It is written in gore over the whole face of earth; call up the shades of the thousands that

sunk in the valleys and the mountains of Judea, of those in the solitudes of the Alps, that fell under the sword of Romish and merciless extermination; of those with whose life-blood the fierce Spaniard dyed the soil of South America; of those who were laid low in the glens of Scotland by Episcopalian fury,—you would have army of witnesses which no man could number, the accusers of those who for different faith became the slayers of their brethren. Creeds are naturally allied to the spirit of persecution, for they establish the principle, and act on it, that belief may be a sin, and this is the very life of the persecuting spirit; it was this that built the Inquisition, which for so many ages spread its ruthless tempest in the Christianity of Europe; it was this that called forth the rack, and kindled every fire in which a heretic was ever sacrificed to the demon-god of bigotry: *it was this created a Dominic.* Protestants are fond of calling the Roman Catholic Church a persecuting Church, but that Church can retort the accusation. Every Church is in truth a persecuting Church which acts in the spirit of a Creed. The Reformers maintained the right of the civil magistrate to punish heretics. This, if it needed proof, is triumphantly made out by Bossuet. "There is no need here," he says, "of explaining on that question, whether or no Christian princes have a right to use the sword against their subjects, enemies to sound doctrine and the Church, the Protestants being agreed with us in this point. Luther and Calvin have written books to make good the right and duty of the magistrate in this point. Calvin reduced it to practice, but against Severus and Valentine Gentili. Melancthon approved of this procedure by a letter he wrote him on the subject." John Knox maintained the same doctrine, and even quoted the extermination of the Canaanites as a case which would justify like treatment of heretics. Nay, in the present day, one of the Oxford theologians asserts, "that we ought to anticipate the evils of error in the person of the heresiarch," because he contends that it is better he should

endure pain, than that his error should be propagated, and bring ruin on his infatuated but less guilty followers. This is the true inquisitorial religion. A man who holds sentiments like these is a persecutor in his heart, and it is only by accident that he is not a persecutor with his hand. A man who could send forth that expression, in other days might have been grand inquisitor or a familiar of the Holy Office, and would have dragged his victims to the stake, or gloated over their tortures on the rack. A heresiarch, he maintains, is unworthy of compassion; and in correspondence with this are some passages of Irenæus, quoted with approbation in the Tracts for the Times: "What prospect, then, of peace have we," says this reverend and truculent Ecclesiastic, "who are foes to the brethren? What sacrifice do they think they celebrate, when they become rivals to the Priesthood? When gathered together beyond the pale of the Church, do they think that Christ is still in the midst of them? Though men like these were killed in the profession of their faith, not even by their blood would these spots be washed out. The offence of discord is a weighty offence, it includes no expiation, and is absolved by no suffering." "They cannot remain with God," he says, "who will not remain with one heart in God's Church. Though they be cast to the flame, to the fire to be burnt, or lay down their lives by being a prey to wild beasts, they will gain not the crown of faith, but the penalty of perfidy; their end, not the glorious consummation of religious excellence, but the death-blow of despair. Such men may attain unto death, but can never attain unto the crown." Creeds have sharpened the sword of persecution, though the civil arm was used, and if it now be idle in the sheath, it is more owing to the tolerance of civil governments, than to any change in the spirit of Churchmen. If Rome had her Inquisition, England had her Star Chamber; if Rome had her Dominic, England had her Laud. I wish not, however, to pass unmitigated censure: I am willing and glad

to acknowledge that the Church of England has had many men who were the lights of their age, but they had minds which were not cast in the Athanasian mould. It is not Churches only that persecute, but also sects; not great Churches, but little ones equally; thus did the Genevese, whilst the spirit of Calvin ruled in it; thus did the Dutch Churches, while the Dort-decrees had power, and even Socinus himself persecuted Francis David: a Creed, however simple, can be made an instrument of unjust power, as well as the most complex one. The persecuting spirit is not extinct, but changed; it is now a social and a moral persecution. Long experience has shown that physical torture is useless, and if the principle remained, the power is gone. But never can we sum up the whole amount of evil which Creeds inflicted on the world, until we can count the sighs that have died unheard in the dungeon; until we know all the bitterness of heart which waits on hopeless captivity; until we count the pangs of torture which gave slow consuming death; until we can follow the course of merciless wars, unsoftened by a touch of pity; until we know all the friends that have been made enemies, and the griefs which have in many cases made life a martyrdom; until, in fact, we have all laid bare before us which that day alone will reveal, which reveals all the hidden works of darkness.

II. I have so far shown that Creeds are the enemies of truth, and disqualifying the mind to seek truth aright, by resisting and embarrassing its free development, by ensnaring conscience and destroying charity; I have shown their failure in their proposed objects, and their instrumentality in producing all the evils they pretend to avert, and I proceed in the remaining observations, to establish the second charge. It is one, however, which does not need much elaborate argumentation. It will be easy to discover their tendency, if we consider who are commonly the framers of Creeds, in

what periods they are formed, and in what temper they are usually imposed. They are framed by Ecclesiastics, and for the main purpose of supporting Ecclesiastical supremacy. If we take a few names connected with Creed-making, or with furnishing the materials out of which Creeds are made, we can easily see the spirit in which they are conceived, and of which they are the expression. We have then an Athanasius, an intriguing and ambitious Ecclesiastic, not only the fomenter of spiritual strife in the Church, but by political intermedling, the fomenter of civil strife in the Empire: a Cyril, the opponent of Nestorius, and the hater of Origen; the composer of mighty tomes of divinity, which with much the same kind since, were equally massive, and equally oblivious; a popular preacher at first, and afterwards a most orthodox patriarch; at once the persecutor of the philosophic Pagans, and the heretical Christians: a Tertullian, that exulted in the prospective damnation of heretics, with a zeal that almost rivals some modern Calvinistic writers: a Dominic, that has left the memory of a sanguinary monk, and the name of a saint; who has been often commemorated in the flames of many an auto-de-fe, and has had a durable monument to his glory in the dark piles of the inquisition: a Calvin, the stern Theological tyrant of Geneva, and the slayer of Servetus: a Knox, who pleaded for the extermination of the heretical after the manner of the Canaanites: a Cranmer, who caused so many, both of Catholics and Protestants, to be led to the stake by laws which changed with the fickleness of a tyrant's will, who at last himself blenched before the fate that had been so often prepared for others: a Laud, the pillar of a star-chamber, and the downfall of a throne. Such are some of the men concerned in the formation of Creeds—men of stern natures, of haughty minds, and of boundless spiritual ambition. And as to the periods in which Creeds are commonly made, we know they are in times of religious strife, when different parties are labouring for the ascen-

dancy, when no pains are spared to gain it, when no acts however shameful or dishonest are thought too bad to use, if they assist to humble an opponent, or secure a victory; when passion is heated and malignant, and the judgment totally unfit for impartiality. The history of Councils and Theological cabal is the shame of Christianity. Yet, formularies thus fabricated are to be made the everlasting standards of truth, and men are to be punished here and hereafter because they do not receive as Divine Truth these shapeless abortions of Churchmen's folly. And the temper in which they are imposed is quite in conformity with that in which they are conceived—oppressive, exclusive, unjust. With what a vindictive and grasping spirit have not the Clergy of the English Church laid hold on all they could monopolize of privilege and power; with what resistance to the last they have endeavoured to shut out Dissenters from all the rights of Christians and of citizens. To this hour, had it been in the power of Ecclesiastics, the Test and Corporation Acts had never been repealed, or the Catholic disabilities removed. That which is their power gives sufficient evidence how they would act if they had exclusive possession of more. I mean the Universities, which they keep closed against Dissenters with such an obstinate and gothic bigotry. Nor does the injustice end here: there is a silent, social injustice, which Dissenters suffer; every one feels it, though it is not easily defined. The Churchman, on the strength of signing a Creed which he does not always believe, assumes to be of a higher religious caste than the Dissenter. It is not sufficient that Dissenters contribute from their worldly good to support a system which has no alliance with their conscience, but they must still further undergo the humiliation of being regarded as spiritual and social inferiors. Creeds are the allies of worldly policy, and ever have been since Christianity had the misfortune to become a state religion, for they are the main ties of that unnatural union of Christ's

religion to human governments—a union injurious to both, making the government unjust and partial, and religion selfish and secular. They are worldly in their objects, and they are worldly in their instruments and means. They are made the stepping stones to wealth, rank, and power; for if the Establishment did not give wealth, rank, and power, numbers of expectants would be moderate enough as to the Articles and Creeds. It would seem anomalous if universal history did not make it evident, that a body of men in all ages, pledged to denounce covetousness and earthly passions, pledged to preach humility after the example of a crucified master, pledged to curb by heavenly motives the abuse of power, should be of all men themselves the most insatiate in their desires after gain, the most haughty in their elevation to station, the severest and the most grinding in the exercise of prerogative, the least willing to mitigate it, and the most determined not to share it. In every period of the Church, the worldliness of Ecclesiastics, their ambition, and their love of lucre, have been proverbial, the scandal of Christians, and the scorn of unbelievers. The covetousness of the Priest, has, in all periods, been outstripped by his pride alone; and under every change in society, the Priesthood have taken care to secure themselves so that their lines should fall in the most pleasant places. The struggle is a worldly one from beginning to end, it is all of the world and the things of the world; if the prize were not of earth, we should hear far less noise amongst the combatants. The struggle is a worldly one, the policy is a worldly one, the means and ends are worldly. For are there any means so evil, that Creeds, if there is a purpose to be gained, will not tempt to, or assist with force, if there be the power to use it; with fraud, if there is a necessity that demands it? Creeds and doctrines have been maintained by frauds the most barefaced, by every artifice and by every falsehood. But Creeds are indirectly the cause of dire immorality; of immorality

giance to sacerdotal authority, and by which, if he can, he will enforce it. Creeds are instruments of worldly and of spiritual despotism. The relation of the Priesthood to the civil power, is changeful and capricious; one time its slave, another time its tyrant. Cunning Kings have always had the sagacity to see that the safest course was to flatter and enrich the Priesthood, giving them the shield of the temporal power, and receiving in return the support of the whole spiritual armoury either from heaven or hell; and both, thus agreed and united, have been enabled to enslave the people with a most hopeless bondage. Let the Prince but heap good things on the Church, hate her enemies, curse her opponents, patronise her friends, the Church gratefully in return submits to him with most obsequious obedience. But reverse the case, and suppose the Prince not only ventures to do without the Priests, but attempts to curtail some of their good things, then no epithet is too strong to mark his iniquity; he is then profane, heretical, infidel: and if the superstition of the people give them the power, they compel him to bend before spiritual prowess, and from being their master, reduce him to their slave. The spirit of a Creed-enforcing Clergy is also seen in this fact, that they dislike the civil power more and more as that power becomes liberal and enlightened; they oppose it, and abuse it in exact proportion as it deserves to be admired and praised: if there be but a symptom that their monopoly is likely to be broken, and that others are about to share blessings which they had so long kept to themselves as to think only their own, immediately the Monarch must be prepared to meet the fierceness of their enmity. It is a combat to which many a Monarch has been unequal, and to which many a one has fallen a victim. Tyranny on their side, and slavery on that of others, is the congenial element in which most established Priesthoods move, breathe, and have their being; the men themselves are the victims of their circumstances.

the worst in its kind, and the most evil in its effects: they corrupt motive in its very source, they weaken that sense of inward sincerity necessary to all that is true and noble in human character, they punish honesty, and they bribe to hypocrisy. How many minds have been robbed of their truthfulness, how many consciences have been despoiled of their integrity, how many hearts sacrificed their purity on the altar of interest and expediency, it would be a long and dark catalogue to enumerate. And it is truly painful to think, that this result is prepared for in the brightest and the best period of life. What must be the effect on a young man who, at the very threshold of his College studies, must profess to believe dogmas that he has scarcely read, that he has never examined; how much worse if he has examined and disbelieves them: if he be honest, he is excluded; the fear of his family starts before him; if he spares them, he ruins his soul; if he speaks the truth, he wrecks, perhaps, all his worldly fortunes beyond redemption. When he sees then the most solemn interests made mere matters of form, religious declarations the tests of honours and of office, the confessions of grave Ecclesiastics but a pompous and solemn hypocrisy, the zeal for worldly gain killing the ardour of religion, the zeal for religion itself only a means to get wealth and power; when, I say, he beholds all this, he can have no other feeling than that of unmitigated contempt for the hollow show of orthodoxy; he must observe that it is only an instrument, a mere make believe, theatrical acting; and the chances are many, that, disgusted with the whole affair, he transfers his disgust to religion in general, and makes shipwreck both of faith and virtue. Creeds are the support of Priestly intolerance; these are the statutes of the Priest. He does not, it is true, require you to believe them, but he requires you to say you believe them; say but that and your peace is made. These are his statutes on which he condemns, or on which he acquits; by which he tries your alle-

giance to sacerdotal authority, and by which, if he can, he will enforce it. Creeds are instruments of worldly and of spiritual despotism. The relation of the Priesthood to the civil power, is changeful and capricious; one time its slave, another time its tyrant. Cunning Kings have always had the sagacity to see that the safest course was to flatter and enrich the Priesthood, giving them the shield of the temporal power, and receiving in return the support of the whole spiritual armoury either from heaven or hell; and both, thus agreed and united, have been enabled to enslave the people with a most hopeless bondage. Let the Prince but heap good things on the Church, hate her enemies, curse her opponents, patronise her friends, the Church gratefully in return submits to him with most obsequious obedience. But reverse the case, and suppose the Prince not only ventures to do without the Priests, but attempts to curtail some of their good things, then no epithet is too strong to mark his iniquity; he is then profane, heretical, infidel: and if the superstition of the people give them the power, they compel him to bend before spiritual prowess, and from being their master, reduce him to their slave. The spirit of a Creed-enforcing Clergy is also seen in this fact, that they dislike the civil power more and more as that power becomes liberal and enlightened; they oppose it, and abuse it in exact proportion as it deserves to be admired and praised: if there be but a symptom that their monopoly is likely to be broken, and that others are about to share blessings which they had so long kept to themselves as to think only their own, immediately the Monarch must be prepared to meet the fierceness of their enmity. It is a combat to which many a Monarch has been unequal, and to which many a one has fallen a victim. Tyranny on their side, and slavery on that of others, is the congenial element in which most established Priesthoods move, breathe, and have their being; the men themselves are the victims of their circumstances,

circumstances which the influence of Creeds have made; for Creeds are the parents of Priestcraft, and Priestcraft is identical with religious despotism.

Creeds are the allies of worldly policy; Creeds are the creatures of the Church, and the Church is the creature of the state. A national Church with Creeds for its tests, and legal support and legal penalties, can be nothing else. And the English Establishment is peculiarly in this condition; are not her Bishops appointed by the government? Are we not all aware that every Prelate is virtually the selected of the minister for the time being? Are we not aware that her canons and constitution, her catechisms and articles, her rubrics and her ceremonies, are enforced and established by acts of parliament? Are we not especially aware that her wealthy revenues are derived from compulsory exaction, and that payment is wrenched from Dissenters by the strong arm of the law?—Whence, but from this source, can the Clergy claim their wealth? By what other power could they enforce it? Every one, who is not a simpleton, knows that the vast possessions in which the Church rejoices, are not free will offerings, and that they have stronger security in the Courts of Exchequer and Chancery, than in the consciences of those who pay them. They were at first endowments to the Church of Rome; it is by act of parliament that they enrich those who maintain the Thirty-nine Articles, instead of praying for souls in Purgatory. The Monarch, in this country, is acknowledged the supreme head of the Church on earth; and though that Monarch may be a girl of eighteen, a boy of eleven, an infant, or an idiot, it is exclusion from the established ministry to deny it, and was once high treason. To be persuaded of this fact, we have only to recollect that the law of the land deposed the Romish Priesthood, and that the Act of Uniformity excluded from the service of the altar two thousand non-conforming Ministers. "The second Canon excommunicates every one who shall endeavour to limit or

extenuate the King's authority in Ecclesiastical cases, as it is settled by the laws of the kingdom; and declares he shall not be restored until he has recanted such impious errors." "The thirty-seventh Canon obliges all persons, to their utmost, to keep and observe all and every one of the statutes and laws made for restoring to the crown the ancient jurisdiction it had over the Ecclesiastical state." "The twelfth of King James's Canons declares, that whoever shall affirm that it is lawful for the order either of Ministers or Laics, to make canons, decrees, or constitutions, in Ecclesiastical matters, without the King's authority, and submits himself to be governed by them, is, *ipso facto*, excommunicated, and is not to be absolved before he has publicly repented and renounced these Anabaptistical errors." Queen Anne, in an angry letter to the Archbishop, made the convocation aware that "she was resolved to maintain her supremacy as a fundamental part of the constitution of the Church of England." "Archbishop Bancroft, when at the head of all the Clergy of England, delivered articles to King James for increasing the Ecclesiastical courts, and for annexing all Ecclesiastical as well as Civil power to the Crown. This may be seen at large in Lord Coke's third institute." On such grounds as these, men claim authority to impose Creeds on their fellow-citizens, to proclaim themselves the commissioned messengers of heaven, to assert religious supremacy and to arrogate a divine right; to bind and loose, to condemn and to forgive. I heard a person lately well remark, that if you gave him the incomes of the Clergy, he would give you the social status of those from whom they were taken, and *vice versa*. At ordination, they solemnly affirm that they are moved by the Holy Ghost; but if the extreme stipend were two or three hundred a year, this inspiration would seldom be found to fall on the son of a Duke, or the brother of an Earl.

But, whatever be the abuses which Creeds occasion, or whatever be the evils they inflict, it may still be said the

Church has authority to decree them; and what she has authority to decree, she has authority to enforce. To one of the strongest arguments on this point lately renewed, and more strenuously urged than it had ever been before, I shall here devote a few general observations.

The claim to dictate and enforce Creeds by the Clergy of our Establishment, is founded on another claim which, by a party of divines, is recently asserted with a zeal not inferior to that of the Romish Priesthood; I allude to the doctrine of Apostolic succession. It is pretended that the national Clergy by deriving a mission from the immediate disciples of Christ, have authority, by a mystical communication of divine energy transmitted to them from age to age, an authority to decide what is, and what is not, the true faith. On this ground the high Churchmen consistently deny to all other Ministers the power to teach or to preach, and with one fell stroke, cut off the whole of the Dissenters from the spiritual body of Christ. On this ground we may ask several questions which must receive very unsatisfactory, or very contradictory answers. First—where, in the gospel history, is it proposed, as an essential qualification of a religious teacher, that he shall have an uninterrupted succession from the Apotles? Paul, in his letters to Timothy and Titus, enumerates many qualities which should distinguish the Christian Minister; but Apostolical succession is not once mentioned amongst the number. In the early age of Christianity, we have abundant evidence, both from Evangelical and Ecclesiastical history, that many preached the gospel who had no such authority as Churchmen call Ordination or Holy orders. Secondly—is it possible that the Apostles could have any successors? The Apostles had powers to which no Priest in his highest pride, will dare to lay claim; the Apostles healed the sick, cast out demons, raised the dead; they proved their mission by miracles, and this gave a peculiarity to their office which, it will be admitted, was not transfer-

able. Besides, between the office of an Apostle and that of a Bishop, there is no identity, and few analogies. An Apostle was a missionary, a Bishop is a temporal and spiritual peer: there is no more resemblance of one to the other, than of his grace of Canterbury amidst the sumptuous luxury of his palace, to a Moravian preacher in the snows of Lapland; than of the Bishop of Exeter declaiming politics in the senate, to Felix Neff proclaiming Christ amidst the Alps. An Apostle was a poor man, a Bishop is a rich one; an Apostle was a pilgrim and wanderer, a Bishop is a mitred prince; an Apostle was the object of contumely and scorn to a world which was not worthy of him, a Bishop is the praised and the applauded by a world of which he is worthy; an Apostle was the servant of the humble and the lowly, a Bishop is the companion of the exalted and the great; an Apostle was the object of state persecution, a Bishop is the favourite of state patronage: by what paradoxical mistake, therefore, one office came to be derived from the other, it is a puzzle to conjecture. Thirdly—by what sort of evidence is the succession to be proved; what are the conditions which render it true and genuine? By what signs am I to know that the Ecclesiastical concatenation is one whole unbroken chain, without a single heretical flaw? By what signs am I to know that the sacerdotal mystery is rightly given, that there is no spuriousness, no falsehood, and no forgery? Is every peasant, who hears a sermon from his Parson, to be in possession of that historic lore, which shall enable him to determine, by erudite tracing of age to age, that orthodox hands have been laid on othodox heads, and that he to whom he commits the salvation of his soul has all the conditions of a true priesthood? Fourthly—Whence does the Church of England derive her succession?—That she derives it from the Church of Rome, all authentic ecclesiastical history confirms. The establishment of the English Church can be clearly traced no further than the mission of

Austin the Romish Monk; and it is well known, indeed, there is no attempt at denial, that all which have since been called papal errors, were then proclaimed and adopted. The preacher came with the pope's sanction, the English received the pope's religion, and acknowledged the pope's authority. It is vain beyond all vanities to argue for succession in the English Establishment, and assert its independence on the Church of Rome. Its origin is from a Roman Missionary; it admits the validity of Roman ordination; its liturgies and rituals are but garbled or abridged translations from Roman formularies. Whence then is the independence? If unbroken succession be the absolute condition of ecclesiastical authority, then the English establishment must either admit the jurisdiction of the Church of Rome, or acknowledge itself guilty of rebellion, and confess that it is wanting in one of the prime essentials of a Christian Church. But our Establishment accuses the Romish system of all manner of errors and of evils, of idolatry, of tyranny, of persecution, of doing dishonour to the supremacy of God, and of undermining the merits of Christ,—of being an awful and fatal apostacy: surely then the purity of that descent may well be doubted, which comes from so corrupt a source. The Church of Rome is called by all our declamatory divines the "mother of harlots,"—if that of England be one of her daughters, it is a hard task for a controversialist to defend the legitimacy of her birth or the purity of her character. Moreover, that is a queer kind of unbroken succession, which could in a few years reflect so many hues of doctrine, which turned from reign to reign like the weathercock before the wind, as royal caprice determined, from the bigoted half popery of the Eighth Henry to the whole Protestantism of the Sixth Edward; from the violent Catholic Mary, to the equally violent reformed Elizabeth; from a Cranmer to a Gardiner, and from a Gardiner to a Laud. It is not, therefore, grateful or graceful in our Establishment to heap odium on her mother, her

from whom she must date her existence, to whom she traces her clergy, and from whom she has received her creed.

III. In disputing against creeds, and churches which are the creatures of creeds, I do not deny that religion most genuine and pure, may exist in many forms—and may be as fervent amongst the adherents of Establishments as amongst the most zealous of dissenting churches. Religion, I consider, a necessity of the human heart; it may grovel in the dust or aspire to the skies—it may appeal to our fears or to our hopes —it may create hideous images or rejoice in beautiful picturings; it may decorate the altar with flowers, or bathe it in blood; but still it belongs to us, is of us, and that of which we cannot, if we would, divest ourselves. While man has within his soul admiration of greatness and power, unsatisfied desires and perishing pleasures; while he has many griefs and many tears; while there are those living whom he loves, and those departed whom he mourns; while his existence is thus bound to the past and to the future; while he has speculations that seek but find no limit, musings on his own and universal destiny,—he must have religion to destroy these, and you destroy religion, but you also destroy humanity. If the strongest excitements and the deepest contrasts could fill and satisfy the human soul, our age and country supply them; whatever would fix us to the material and the present we have in all possible varieties, both in their glory and their grossness. If the spirit is to be seen anxious with poverty we have but a few steps to walk from rejoicing splendour to pining misery. Civilization is amongst us with all its luxuries and with all its woes. Thousands toil for daily bread, and thousands more languish for daily pleasures. Yet nobler things have we than these. Our science, our philosophy, and our literature, are rich beyond expression. Our mechanism is akin to magic, and our industry is like the regularity of nature; the stir of many interests is abroad, and the struggle of many principles. The

power of fresh life is in the social heart, and the courage of free speech upon the lips. The tide of thought and liberty moves onward with majestic swell, and no one can say "Hitherto shalt thou come and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be staid." Whatever there be in wealth, in power, in glory, in ambition, that desires triumphant sway and secures all it desires; whatever there be in speculation of boundless enterprize or capacity of gigantic achievement, our times may boast, yet they remove not the need of religion, but the religion which the heart demands is not what creeds or churches can give either to a nation or an individual.

Creeds are the allies of establishments, and establishments are the friends of the world. Their whole history and tendency are evidence of this. But, far be it from me to say that this has no qualification. All old institutions more or less knit themselves into popular veneration, the religious as well as others. We cannot look back upon the church of our country, even in its Romish form, without some of the reverence with which our nature compels us to gaze on fallen greatness; and now that the mitre is worn by other heads, and the crosier passed into other hands, now that its good deeds reveal themselves in the calm of the past, we can regard its evil ones more in sorrow than in anger. Zealots, who would eternalize the darkest creeds that superstition ever shaped, who would build up the throne of proudest priesthood, declaim against Popery in the most popish spirit: but while national feelings have any power, while a single venerable structure stands upon our soil in which we hear the voices of our ancestors, and from which a thousand years look down upon us, the Roman church, with all its errors, is linked by sacred memories to our history. It laid the foundation of our civilized existence; it grew with our growth and it strengthened with our strength. When our country was yet divided amongst barbarian kings, the monk of Rome lifted up the cross of Christ, and the heart of the savage was sub-

dued to the Prince of Peace. It accompanied our national independence, it trained our fathers' spirits when living, and now they are dead it shelters their bones. Through all historic changes, and through most sanguinary struggles, it preserved alive the spirit of our common Christianity.

Within it arose many of our greatest men; it nurtured many of our purest and holiest characters; it reared the altar at which an Anselm ministered and before which an Alfred prayed. But wealth commonly brings worldliness, and as it is with laymen, so is it with ecclesiastics. The church was fed and fostered by Saxon piety, and when the conquest gave the island new masters it suffered nothing by the change. The progress of aggrandizement went forward with a quicker pace and a more grasping hand. Spiritual authority allied itself more firmly to temporal majesty; celestial vocation would have feudal titles; the coil would be transformed to the coronet; the humble robe to the princely purple; the voice of humility swelled into absolute command, monks took their places above barons, and the primate sat only below the throne.

But under that pomp and ostentation, we say not that all was hollow—that there was not much of genuine piety far beyond the reach of history. In the cells of these gorgeous abbeys there were many who did in reality leave the world and its wickedness behind them. There were some who wept and prayed in no feigned prostration, who worshipped, it may be with superstition, but still with sensibility and an upright conscience. In that stream of melody which pealed at solemn midnight through many a dome that now lies mouldering, there were some hallelujahs which reached the throne of God and mingled with the hymn of angels. The pavements over which we tread in many a secluded ruin may have been worn by kneeling martyrs that now sleep in peace beneath them: within these massive buildings so grey and time-wrecked, how often might be found at the evening hour, when the

dim religious light melted through the painted windows, and the vesper song softened through the lofty vaults, scattered worshippers who were feeding their immortal life: how frequently within those temples may the serf in faith and prayer have forgotten his bonds, and only remembered that he was the brother of Jesus, and the son of God. And amongst that priesthood so often stigmatized unjustly by indiscriminate bigotry, many were worthy of their office; they were the poor man's friends when poverty was hopeless; they were his brethren when to the worldly powers poverty was slavery; they were his supporters and consolers when he had many to oppress and few to cheer him; they were with him in joy and sorrow, in sickness and death, when his joy and sorrow, his sickness and death, were to the mass of his worldly superiors, a matter of contemptible indifference. In the times to which I refer, the Church was a most excellent antagonist against political assumption, a barrier against despotism, a shield for the people against the crown; but now it is an ally of the crown only when the crown is against the people: in either, the Crown and the Church struggle may have been only for supremacy, but whatever were their respective motives, the people were the gainers; the clergy might make them slaves for another world, but they saved them from being slaves in this. The power of the priest could curb the ambition of the ruler; and, in the ruler himself, the will of the monarch was held in check by the conscience of the devotee. Ecclesiastical institutions were then not wholly ineffective, but now the religious and social interests of man are better secured than by any struggle between the superstitious fears of the Prince, and the spiritual threatenings of the Priest. From these social changes, Church Establishments outliving the slaveries which they meliorated, become inflictors of slavery in return, and hang as millstones and dead weights on every effort for freedom and advancement. But if we are to have authority on conscience

at all in the form of institutions, I would rather it should be absolute and unchangeable, uniform, solemn, and imposing; and if there is to be submission, I prefer it should be to that which is believed to be stedfast and infallible; for then, if we had not the freedom of thought, we might at least have the peace of piety; if we had not the independence of men, we might hope for the meekness of children.

We cannot say that the English Church in its Protestant state has lost all claims to traditional veneration. We may, however, safely assert, that in becoming protestant, it has not become less earthly, and that if transformed in anything, it is not from the Spirit of the world. We see very clearly, that it is not in any way distinguished for free or progressive amendment; and among the Reformed of European churches it is most the creature of the world, most the lover of the world, most dependent on the world, both in its origin and its continuance.

On the continent it commenced with the ecclesiastical powers; in ours it commenced with the civil; and the church in this country adopted the new doctrine rather as a matter of command than as a matter of conscience. Whatever have been the theological vibrations of the Establishment, or whatever its theological inconsistencies, we deny not that it has had within it right noble spirits, and that it has them still, and while we condemn such systems, we do not so much condemn, as lament the fine natures which they have misdirected. Numbers we are aware are now in its ranks, which are the ornaments of life and to whom the world is in many ways indebted; and if it were not so, there are those gone by who would fully dignify her. Amongst her members we recognise many of the great lights both of our nation and our nature; a Jeremy Taylor of rich eloquence and rare sweetness of spirit; a Barrow with a mind as lofty as it was simple and an oratory as prodigal in thought as it was massive in logic; a Chillingworth, the prince of reasoners, who never allowed

his polemics to ruffle his meekness, to warp his candour, or to deaden his charity; a Berkeley, whose genius was only inferior to his sanctity, and whose subtle philosophy never disturbed the simplicity of his truly child-like nature; a Bedel, who was humble and generous when it was the fashion to oppress, who though the bishop of a foreign faith in the midst of a people whom his nation had aggrieved, made his way to their hearts, and was the object of their blessings; and in our own day there has been the good and sainted Heber, who combined piety with humanity, and who adorned practical virtue with all the beauty of the poet and the Christian.

Names like these might throw a lustre over any system; it is only to be regretted that any system has not been more fruitful in their production. In any system, we cannot expect that such men should be abundant, but observation compels us to confess that the Church has taken more pride in the reputation of her heroes, than in resembling them. If we are to judge results by her possessions and opportunities compared with her moral or spiritual achievements, her works of worldliness far surpass her works of godliness. Her earthly means have been unbounded, but where are her heavenly trophies? She has nothing in comparison to her opportunities to produce in justification of her moral and national stewardship. Wealth she has had even to fulness. Her lines have fallen in pleasant places; hers have been the green pastures and hers the still waters; the tenth of the nation's produce has been reserved for her altars. Political power has likewise been hers. Her mitred ministers are amongst the state's chief senators. Whether it be seemly or not, that preachers of the crucified should sit in courts of proud and worldly legislation, we here forbear to discuss; but once there, the spirit of the crucified, and of the citizen sanctified by that spirit, might have been nobly manifested; even there, Ministers of Christ might have done a glorious

work. Men whose lives had been disciplined by severe and various study; men of chastened passions and solemn meditation; men who had gone through the humanizing duties of pastoral gradation from the village pulpit to the episcopal throne, might be thought a happy counterpoise to the hoary worldliness or youthful rashness of mere temporal Peers; they would rebuke, we might suppose, the assumptions of aristocracy, and be as the voice of God for the rights of the poor. Men who proclaimed that gospel which is full of mercy and compassion, would resist oppression to the last, and denounce sanguinary laws with the whole force of their authority; men who were followers of peace would arrest the blood-hand of war, and quell with all gentle suasion the horrid spirit of destruction; men appointed to be teachers of the ignorant, and lights to the blind, would be the friends of universal instruction; men who were the Priests of that God before whom all are equal, the Apostles of that Jesus who lived and died for all, would be ever the friends of liberty and brotherhood. But, I may ask, when have the Bishops, as a body, not been against the people, and with the wealthy and the noble? When have they been the first to come forward to denounce long existing, tolerated, but oppressive, abuses? When have they raised their voice, as Ministers of God, against Ministers of the Crown, to avert the horrid curse of war? When have they given their influence for a free and generous education, which should be full and boundless as the heart of charity? When, rather, have they not thrown their most inveterate opposition against it? When is it that a single effort of national liberty or religious has met their cordial support? To the moment of despair they stood against the Catholic and the Dissenter, to the last hour they will also resist the Jew. The defender of the wronged, the pleader for the weak, the opponent of sanctified prejudices, the enthusiast for human reforms, the advocate for peace, the apostle of general education, have never in their most

hopeless hour raised their eyes towards the bench of Bishops with any expectations of support.

With wealth, with influence, with law, and with scholarship, the Church has done, and is doing no great spiritual work for her country, or for mankind, proportioned to her means. She makes a show of upholding her Creeds, but to many, even of her own members, they are but empty sounds or convenient mockeries. When we look for any permanent impression on the popular mind, we have yet to ask concerning the Church, what has she done? Has she Christianized any great tracts of Heathenism? The English Establishment, as a Church, has exhibited no missionary zeal, and can show no missionary triumphs. Individuals and bodies that belong to her communion, have undoubtedly been active in the great movements that distinguish modern times, but the impulse has been from outside the Church, and not from within it—from the zeal of the Sectaries, and not from the Creeds or Constitution of the Church. On the contrary, of those who never owned the Establishment, you might find proofs of Missionary zeal from Indus to the Pole, and from Andes to the Alps. But has she protestantized our own empire? Consult the writings of Doctor Baines, or those of Doctor Wiseman; nay, let the lamentations of Reformation Society itself, ever wailing over the increase of Popery, give the answer; look through the villages and the glens of England, where Roman Catholic Chapels are starting up as from the earth, and you will find the answer fully justified. Ask it in the cities and the mountains of Ireland, the shout of millions will proclaim what Established Protestantism has done with all her Creeds and Clergy after centuries of existence, and a countless expenditure. Three hundred years have nearly expired since the reformed standard has been planted on that soil, and after all the spoliation and persecution to which the country has been subjected, after all the blood and sorrow that have been expended in

the work of compulsory proselytism, Popery has grown stronger, and Protestantism is expiring. The people pay with repugnance a priesthood in whom they have not faith, but no power can force them to the worship in which they have no heart, and they prefer to be taxed rather than be taught. They are repelled further and further from that system which commenced in a blunder, and has been continued by rapacity, which reverses the precepts of Christ, using the sword where he commands it to be sheathed—which reverses the course of the olden Israelites finding a land of milk and honey, but leaving it a wilderness, having the pillar of fire always before, and the pillar of cloud ever behind; the one kept in flame by hatred and strife, and the other continually dark with maledictions and tears. But admitting the difficulties of proselytism, examine the moral state of those over whom the Church has had undivided control—those with whom there has been least of foreign interference, and I may appeal to her most strenuous defenders, whether she has not allowed thousands of human souls to grow up around her for whom she provided no shelter, whose hearts and wants she made no effort to reach: they lived without her teaching, they mourned without her solace, they sickened without her prayer, and until she received the fees for their burial, she was ignorant of their existence. Yet, after all, by many she has been called "*The poor man's Church.*" It is true that for some years past, and especially at present, there has been a species of excitement and activity in the church: but so far as these have moral life in them, so far as they concern the spiritual interests of the people, whence did they originate? Where were they before John Wesley and Whitfield raised their soul-piercing cries, and awoke the sense of immortality that was dormant in the minds of besotted multitudes? Did the church join with these men, or rather did it not persecute, calumniate, expel them—say and do all manner of evil against

them? What at the present hour is the activity of the church? Much, it may be, is sincere and conscientious, but greatly more an emulation with dissenters in which the pregnant elements are jealousy and fear. Much, it may be, of disinterested action for the souls of men, but more it is to be feared for the order and the church. Great excitement there is in the Establishment, but little of calm and healthy action—a mighty stir of polemics that make few converts, and of societies that beat the air. The church has neither union within, nor peace without. Her hand is against all, and the hands of all are against her. She holds forth creeds as the symbols of unity, and yet within her own courts are all sorts of divisions, a chaos of voices that make her the very Babel of theology; here is one preaching the grace of Palagius, and there another that of Augustine; one arguing for the hell of Calvin, and another all but teaching the purgatory of the pope: one a Boanerges for the Bible, and another an apostle for tradition; with one, Rome is the mother of abominations, and with another she is the mistress of churches. Amidst the din, then, of polemics, politics, and theological contradictions, of inward confusion and outward strifes, how are we to catch the voice of moral power and of gospel truth? The truth must be told, there is no grand or concentrative energy of any sort in the church; neither faith nor freedom, neither bold speculation nor a mighty spiritual zeal; there is no room even for a gigantic fanaticism or a picturesque superstition; upon the whole the strife is of this world, and for it; a strife for wealth or place, in which the spiritual is swallowed in the earthly. With all her riches and honours; with all her show of dignities and pride of prelacy, she is yet poor in enlightened esteem, poorer still in general affection; without authority to sway the superstitious or liberality to attach the thinking, she has neither the submission of faith nor the approbation *of* reason. She has, considering her position and means, fulfilled no great Christian or Protestant mission; is she then

in a humbler sphere, the friend of general education? Passing over the Universities, which with a heavy hand she has bolted against dissenters, is she favourable to the instruction of the youthful poor? No: except in connection with her ecclesiastical supremacy. Until recently she had no zeal whatever in the matter: but other parties becoming active, under the broad gaze of public observation, both her fears and her interest were awakened. Whilst others were toiling, she for very shame could not sit wholly idle, and she therefore adopted education, so far as it was an instrument to counteract her rivals or to preserve her authority. But to the last and to the death, she is the sworn enemy to any system of popular instruction which is comprehensive, liberal, and unsectarian. In this great country, where, thanks to law and not to creeds, each man may hold and speak his own opinion, she meets with defiance and resistance every movement towards a large and equal distribution of knowledge, for lack of which the people are literally perishing. In a country like this where sects are so many and so various, and where each has an equal claim on the blessings of civilized institutions, with a bigotry equalled only by its injustice, she would usurp the monopoly of national instruction. This is in the true spirit of creeds, and however repugnant to Christian equity is fully consistent with worldly policy.

When the church of England seceded from that of Rome, if she cut off some theological errors, she showed no such disposition respecting her earthly riches. It cannot be doubted that in the Reformed Establishment, a greed of lucre remained as deep as was ever in the Romish, less ideal in its form, and more selfish in its spirit. In our times men absorb the interests of their church in the interests of themselves, in olden times men lost themselves in the glory of their church; in that was centered every thing, even passion itself, as one great and mighty sentiment. From this it was arose the solemn structure of universal empire; from this sprung forth the

vision of a glory that was to fill the universe. It was this called up a power before which monarchs bowed, which armed itself with the terrors of hell and crowned itself with the stars of heaven. It was this which gave genius the sublimity of religious inspiration, and which has left for a colder age the forms of beauty to which faith gave life; it was this which could speak to the world as to single audience with an eloquence that must live while language has existence. It may be called fanaticism and ambition, but it is a fanaticism and an ambition that had something unworldly to dignify them. The reformed church had preserved the creeds of the ancient one, but not its creativeness; it has not given conscience freedom, but it has stripped faith of poetry. Even the ceremonies and forms which it has preserved are without energy and inspiration—the mere mimicries of superstition unfraught with a single breath of its enthusiasm. Writings of no common eloquence have eulogized the cathedral service; it deserves all that can be said of it, and so do the temples themselves; no one can hear the one when it receives right expression without solemn emotion, and no one can behold the antique majesty of the other, but in silent veneration. The poetry of these things is beautiful, but what is the reality? A sad contrast—in general, a cold and heartless utterance of the service, unoccupied pews, a few listless hearers, feeble choirs, that seem rather to sing the requiem than the triumph of the church, ostentation without grandeur, and formality without grace. Here, as in every other department, we find the dominant spirit of worldliness. Though this service depends for much of its impression on ritual beauty, yet the higher clergy continually encroach on the revenues and means of sustaining it. "When we see," says Dr. Wiseman, "the cathedral service shrunk into the choir o[illegible]lly designed for the private daily worship of God [illegible]inisters, or when we find the entire congregatic[illegible]mall portion of the repaired chancel, while [illegible]a majestic

ruin, as I but lately witnessed, assuredly one must be more prone to weep than to exult at the change which has taken place, since these stately fabricks were erected." I would not have the world hurled back into Popery; but if we are to have Romish creeds, rather than have them in repulsive nakedness, give them to us covered and adorned with the grace of Romish ceremonies; if we are to resign our liberty, give us at least grandeur and pageantry to amuse our slavery.

But creeds exist otherwise than in formal expression. A creed is the standard of a church, it may be the spirit of a sect. And from the antagonistic aspect which each sect bears to another, and the centralized organization which it has within itself, this spirit may have a fierce and powerful operation. The Church-creed is defined; the Sect-creed is vague, and may depend for interpretation on narrow and bitter prejudice: the Church-creed may possibly lie dormant, but there is no escape from the wakeful vigilance of a religious surveillance. What some sects do by enlarged and rigid co-operation, others effect by compact and separate unions. The smallness of the assemblies, or the gradations of dependency, puts one individual within the immediate ken of another, and thus, if by chance a free thought should be born, there is little hope that it shall live. Take methodism as an illustration; so gigantic and yet so minute: with its band-meetings, its class-meetings, its district assemblies, and its general conference—leaving not a spot where a heretic could hide himself. In such a system there is neither room nor a name for liberty, from the preacher who is under the brow of his conference to the member who lives in the eye of his class-leader. It is not that such a system creates a terror of expression, from the first it initiates a slavish intellect—and tends to all the vices of rancour, bigotry, hypocrisy, and subserviency, to which such an intellect is allied.

It may be said that my own community in being also a sect, is open to similar accusations. I do not say that a

dictation of belief is essential to a sect, but it may possibly attach to it with all the despotism of the most formal creed. If a creed in spirit or expression be necessary to the constitution of a sect, those then are no sect with whom I would desire to hold communion. If all in my own belief or any other, which is great, good, pure, and eternal, inspired by the mind of God and blessed to the heart of man; if all which disseminates virtue; which justifies Providence, which emancipates and glorifies society, goes onward with undeviating pace, if the Kingdom of Jehovah extends, and the throne of Christ is reared, and the temple of righteousness is beautified, then, forgetting ourselves and forgetting our sect, we should rejoice with an honest and generous exultation. We trust the day will come, when the spirit and the life of Christ, and not the formularies of men, will be the standards of true religion; when we shall have unity instead of divisions, when we shall have charity instead of creeds, when heretic and orthodox shall be lost in the common name of Christian.

THE CHRISTIAN VIEW

OF

MORAL EVIL.

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN

ADVERTISEMENT.

The Lecture originally announced as the TENTH of this Course, having been postponed, in consequence of the illness of the Preacher, to the end, the *numbering* of the Series has been disturbed. It has been thought expedient to number the published Lectures in the order of their *actual* rather than their *intended* delivery: but this determination was not adopted in time to influence the printing of the last-published Lecture on Creeds, which was therefore erroneously described in the title-page as the ELEVENTH, instead of the TENTH. To remedy the mistake, a cancel title-page and first leaf for that Lecture are inserted in the present publication.

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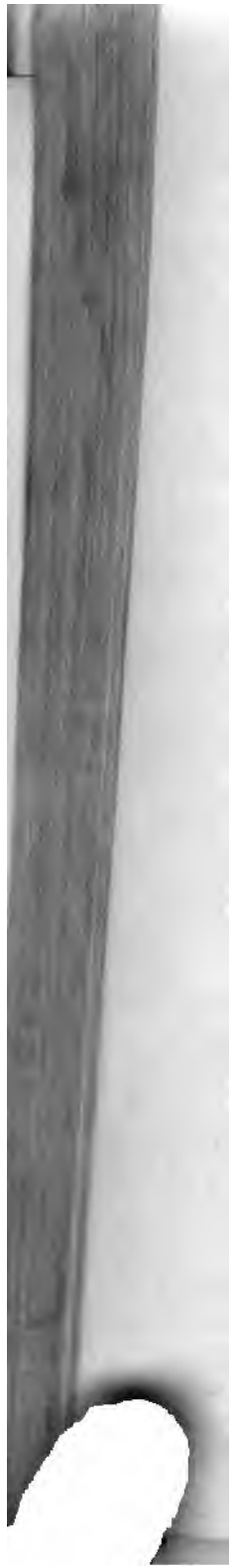

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LECTURE XI.

THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF MORAL EVIL.

BY REV. JAMES MARTINEAU.

"WOE UNTO THEM THAT SAY, ... LET THE COUNSEL OF THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL DRAW NIGH AND COME, THAT WE MAY KNOW IT; WOE UNTO THEM THAT CALL EVIL GOOD, AND GOOD EVIL; THAT PUT DARKNESS FOR LIGHT, AND LIGHT FOR DARKNESS; THAT PUT BITTER FOR SWEET, AND SWEET FOR BITTER."—*Isaiah* v. 18—20.

THE Divine sentiments towards right and wrong every man naturally believes to be a reflexion of whatever is most pure and solemn in his own. We cannot be sincerely persuaded, that God looks with aversion on dispositions which we revere as good and noble; or that he regards with lax indifference the selfish and criminal passions which awaken our own disgust. We may well suppose, indeed, his scrutiny more searching, his estimate more severely true, his rebuking look more awful, than our self-examination and remorse can fitly represent; but we cannot doubt that our moral emotions, as far as they go, are in sympathy with his; that we know, by our own consciousness, the general direction of his approval and displeasure; and that, in proportion as our perceptions of Duty are rendered clear, our judgment more nearly approaches the precision of the Omniscient award. Our own conscience is the window of heaven through which we gaze on God: and, as its colours perpetually change, his aspect changes too; if they are bright and fair, he dwells as in the warm light of a rejoicing love; if they are dark and turbid, he

hides himself in robes of cloud and storm. When you have lost your self-respect, you have never thought yourself an object of divine complacency. In moments fresh from sin, flushed with the shame of an insulted mind, when you have broken another resolve, or turned your back upon a noble toil, or succumbed to a mean passion, or lapsed into the sickness of self-indulgence, could you ever turn a clear and open face to God, nor think it terrible to meet his eye? Could you imagine yourself in congeniality with him, when you gave yourself up to the voluble sophistry of self-excuse, and the loose hurry of forgetfulness? Or did you not discern him rather in your own accusing heart, and meet him in the silent anguish of full confession, and find in the recognition of your alienation the first hope of return? To all unperverted minds, the verdict of conscience sounds with a preternatural voice; it is not the homely talk of their own poor judgment, but an oracle of the sanctuary. There is something of anticipation in our remorse, as well as of retrospect; and we feel that it is not the mere survey of a gloomy past with the slow lamp of our understanding, but a momentary piercing of the future with the vivid lightning of the skies. Our moral nature, left to itself, intuitively believes that guilt is an estrangement from God,—an unqualified opposition to his will,—a literal service of the enemy; that he abhors it, and will give it no rest till it is driven from his presence, that is, into annihilation: that no part of our mind belongs to him but the pure, and just, and disinterested affections which he fosters; the faithful will which he strengthens; the virtue, often damped, whose smoaking flax he will not quench, and the good resolves, ever frail, whose bruised reed he will not break: and that he has no relation but of displeasure, no contact but of resistance, with our selfishness and sin. In the simple faith of the conscience it is no figure of speech to say, that God "is angry with the wicked every day," and is "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity." So long as the natural religion of the

heart is undisturbed, to sin is, in the plainest and most positive sense, to set up against Heaven, and frustate its will.

Soon, however, the understanding disturbs the tranquillity of this belief, and constructs a rival creed. The primitive conception of God is acquired, I believe, without reasoning, and emerges from the affections; it is a transcript of our own emotions,—an investiture of them with external personality and infinite magnitude. But a secondary idea of Deity arises in the intellect, from its reasonings about causation. Curiosity is felt respecting the origin of things; and the order, beauty, and mechanism of external nature, are too conspicuous not to force upon the observation the conviction of a great architect of the universe, from whose designing reason its forces and its laws mysteriously sprung. Hence the *intellectual* conception of *God the Creator*, which comes into inevitable collision with the *moral* notion of *God the holy watch of virtue*. For if the system of creation is the production of his Omniscience; if he has constituted human nature as it is, and placed it in the scene whereon it acts; if the arrangements by which happiness is allotted, and character is formed, are the contrivance of his thought and the work of his hand, then the sufferings and the guilt of every being were objects of his original contemplation, and the productions of his own design. The deed of crime must, in this case, be as much an integral part of his Providence as the efforts and sacrifices of virtue; and the monsters of licentiousness and tyranny, whose images deform the scenery of history, are no less truly his appointed instruments than the martyr and the sage. And though we remain convinced that he does not make choice of evil in his government, for its own sake, but only for ultimate ends worthy of his perfections, still we can no longer see how he can truly hate that which he employs for the production of good. That which is his chosen instrument cannot be sincerely regarded as his everlasting enemy; and only figuratively can he be said to

repudiate a power which he continually wields. There must be *some sense* in which it appears, in the eye of Omniscience, to be eligible; some point of view at which its horrors vanish; and where the moral distinctions, which we feel ourselves impelled to venerate, disappear from the regards of God.

Here, then, is a fearful contradiction between the religion of conscience and the religion of the understanding: the one pronouncing evil to be the antagonist, the other to be the agent, of the divine will. In every age has this difficulty laid a heavy weight upon the human heart; in every age has it pointed the sarcasm of the blasphemer; mingled an occasional sadness with the hopes of benevolence; and tinged the devotion of the thoughtful with a somewhat melancholy trust. The whole history of speculative religion is one prolonged effort of the human mind to destroy this contrariety; system after system has been born in the struggle to cast the oppression off; with what result, it will be my object at present to explain. The question which we have to consider is this: "How should a Christian think of the origin and existence of evil?" I propose to advert, first, to the speculative; secondly, to the scriptural; thirdly, to the moral relations of the subject; to inquire what relief we can obtain from philosophical schemes, from biblical doctrine, and from practical Christianity.

I. Notwithstanding the ingenuity of philosophers in varying the form and language of their systems, there can be but two solutions offered to the great problem respecting evil. The benevolence of the Creator may be vindicated, by denying that he is the author of evil; or, by pronouncing it his mere tool, unavoidably introduced for the production of greater good.

(1.) In Greece, the genius of whose people anticipated most of the great ideas which have since occupied the world, we find the first clear trace of the doctrine of two ori[illegible]

causes; one good, the other evil, of the order and disorder of the universe.* Amid the almost universal pantheism, which gave the sanction of philosophy to a corrupting mythology, one or two great thinkers seized on the true conception of an intelligent, eternal, infinite Mind; not mixed up in indissoluble oneness with the universe, like the principle of life with an animal or vegetable organism, but wholly external to matter, capable of acting objectively upon it, of moulding it into form, of assigning to it laws, of disposing it into uniform arrangements, and subordinating it to the production of beauty, the reception of life and soul, and the ends of benevolence. With the absolute perfection, intellectual and moral, of the creative spirit, there was nothing to interfere; he called into existence only what is good,—light, life, happiness, wisdom, harmony, virtue. All else was to be ascribed to the imperfect materials from which the universe was constructed. Of these he was not supposed to be the author; no conception was entertained of creation out of nothing by the volition of the divine and solitary Spirit. Co-eternally with him, matter was thought to have existed, inert, and dark and formless,—the boundless and unworked quarry, whence the great Artist of earth and skies moulded the orbs of heaven, and furnished his mansions of space with magnificence and beauty. The materials thus provided to his hand, did not afford unlimited facilities for the execution of his good designs; they had the inherent and obstinate properties of all matter, of which skill might variously avail itself, but which Omnipotence could not utterly subdue. They for ever dragged down every being towards the passiveness and chaos of the primeval state, and established a universal gravitation towards nonentity. Hence a ceaseless tendency in all things to descend from the higher to the lower states of existence, and to slip from the divine into the inert: on the soul of man were forces impelling it into the grosser animal life; in

* See Note A.

the animal life, a propensity towards disease and death; and, in lifeless organisms, a law of corruption and return to atoms. In this unconquerable sluggishness of matter, and not in the intention of the Creator, was to be found the source of all evil, natural and moral. The supreme Spirit had called into being whatever is fair and blessed and pure; and that there is no more good, was due to the resistance which his materials offered to his will, and which had made his execution finite, while his desires were infinite.

In this system, all faults and imperfections are attributed to the opposition of a passive and evil principle, co-existent with the First Cause, and restraining him within certain limits in working out the problem of creation. The essential idea of the scheme is, that the actual frame of the universe is the result of a struggle between two conflicting energies, both primitive and eternal, to the one of which is to be referred all that is good, to the other whatever is evil. Make then a slight and superficial change in this scheme; throw aside its abstract and philosophical dress; *personify* this impracticable material principle which stands in the way of the Creator's glorious designs: call it, instead of inert, obstinate; instead of the residence of death, the destroyer of life; instead of a weight on the Divinity, a force against him; in short, treat it, not as negative, but as positive; not as impervious to light, but as the power of darkness; not as a physical obstruction, but as in real antipathy to God: and by such assumption of personality, this hostile energy becomes an active principle of evil, a malignant and antagonist God, busy in frustrating the purposes of Providential goodness, and spreading ruin, disorder, and guilt over the fair regions of nature and the soul.

This doctrine of a good and evil spirit, engaged in perpetual conflict on the theatre of the universe, is then only the popular and mythical form of the philosophical speculations on matter and Deity which I have described. It is commonly

known under the name of the Manichean heresy. It was from very early times the characteristic idea of the Persian theology; and thence, as I shall show, by admixture with Judaism, has given rise to the prevailing belief in a devil.

To this scheme, considered as a metaphysical theory of the divine perfections, and a solution of the perplexities respecting natural and moral evil, objections of insurmountable force will occur to every one. It preserves the infinite benevolence by sacrificing the omnipotence of God. It sets up a rival to his government, from whose malignity he can only imperfectly protect us; so that his Providence becomes precarious, and we feel ourselves the sport of a conflict the most awful, beset by pure, unmitigated, indestructible evils, which, however beaten off in the end, must win against us many a dreadful success. A believer in this doctrine may indeed presume, that a Being, omniscient and benign as God, would never have called a world into existence unless assured, by his foreknowledge, that he could prevailingly protect it from the powers which obstructed him, and render life to every creature on it a blessing on the whole. Under any other conditions, his goodness would have restrained him from the act of creation. Still the blessed Ruler sways his works under constant check; and all limitations on his power must be proportionate deductions from our peace. This theory, then, fails to afford us the desired relief. It does not reconcile the God of our conscience with the God of our understanding: it simply adheres to the former, and rejects the latter; assuring us that, as our secret hearts had said, the great Father hates evil as his enemy; not, as our logic had insinuated, wields it as his instrument.

(2.) We turn, then, to the second attempt to extricate our thoughts from this perplexity; which is found, in a consistent form, only in the system of philosophical necessity. This scheme assumes the absolute, unlimited monarchy of God; represents him as originally alone, and without either

universe or materials for its construction; teaches that he willed all things into existence; conceiving the plan, speaking the word, beholding the birth, sustaining the order, decreeing the means, ordaining the end. The compass of his design is all-embracing; all causes and effects, all enjoyment and misery, all excellence and guilt, lie within its circuit; nor can "there be evil in a city," or in a world, "and the Lord hath not done it." We are assured, that in fact it is impossible to distribute to separate authors the blessing and the curse which appear to mingle in creation; for the same law which brings the one introduces the other; the tempest which blasts the field and flock purifies the air of pestilence; the necessities of the body are the incentives of labour and the stimulants of the mind; and industry and art, commerce and wealth, the whole structure even of society and civilization, rest on the ultimate basis of hunger. Nor is it possible to separate suffering, even in conception, from a scene in which great virtues are to be born, and the diviner forms of character to be trained. Evil is *the resistance,* by its conquest over which moral force can alone be measured and manifested; without which, conscience and fidelity would have no field of victory, benevolence no place for glorious toil, faith and wisdom no consciousness of power. In the sickly seductions of pleasure, are seen the health and simplicity of holiness; amid the temptations of selfishness, we discern and venerate the spirit of self-oblivious love; beneath the arm of tyranny, and amid examples of hypocrisy, we learn how calm the front of uprightness, and how noble the magnanimity of truth. Pain is never *the whole* of suffering; which spreads in moral influence beyond itself and its hour, and administers some of our noblest discipline. The anguish of one human being is usually the pity of many; even the guilt of one may be the forbearance, the warning, the affectionate and healing grief, of many. Scarcely can any ill be found that is not so linked with visible benefits, so entangled with arrangements in which

we recognize indisputable blessings, that one only author can be assigned to all; if he has had foresight of any thing, he must have had foresight of all; if he has devised a part, he must have devised the whole. Even such free-will as the human mind possesses is a power of his own deliberate bestowal; and the whole extent of its disastrous mistakes, its deluded estimates, its degrading preferences, its faithless abuse of liberty, must be considered as ordained and introduced by him for some ultimate and transcendent good. At present, and for a long future yet, the sufferings are great which sin must entail upon all who come within its range; but even its saddest victim is yet a child of God, and must at last (benevolence requires no less) be enabled to pronounce his existence a boon. And hence we must believe the penalties of guilt to be remedial; subduing the stubborn soul, and leading it back to seek its peace in God; working out their own remission, because their victim's restoration; till the wail of despair shall be softened into the sob of repentance, and this into the sigh of self-distrustful hope, falling into the silence of deep resolve; leading to the energy of a new fidelity, warmed by the refreshment of a returning love, and bursting at length into grateful chorus with the song of the redeemed.

The essential idea of this system evidently is, that evil is a result of God's will, his temporary instrument for everlasting ends. This characteristic remaining, it is wholly unimportant whether he is regarded as producing it immediately or mediately; distributively or collectively; by detailed volitions of his own, or by the agency of a being commissioned to this department of his government. As the blessings, scattered by the activity of good minds of every order in the universe, are no less his, than if there were no creature but himself to shed them forth, so the woes, which any dependent spirits of evil may diffuse, belong as truly to his providence, as if they were the personal inflictions of his will. Hence

the doctrine of wicked angels, and of a created Prince of darkness, is the very same with the system which I have just described; simply, its popular and mythological form, gathering up the abstract conception of evil into a person; but still representing it, in this living dress, as a creature intentionally formed by the Omniscient and predetermining God. I regard the belief in the existence of Satan, not as opposed to the prevailing Unitarian views of Providence, but, *so far as it is consistently held*, as in all essential particulars, identical with them. Its relation to the character of God is the same; and the sole difference between the two is in the question of personality; a question of great consequence, when the existence of a *divine* person, as the Holy Spirit, is suspended on the decision; but of small moment when, as in this case, a mere *creature* more or less is to be given to the invisible world. What does it matter to us whether there be any, or a myriad, of interposing agents between the ills that touch us and our God? Surely it is with the *effects*,—with the evils themselves,—that our practice and duty are concerned, and about their *original cause* that our faith is anxious; and, on both these points, the Necessarian and the Satanic schemes seem to be agreed. Both refer our thoughts back to a time when no evil existed, and say that none could have come into existence, had the creative activity of God never been exercised. Both make the same estimate of the actual sins and sorrows and temptations which are in contact with our life; and whichever view be adopted, these are neither increased nor diminished, their complexion is neither brightened nor darkened, their insidiousness and their treatment continue the same. They come out of the dark upon us; and no more concern us till they strike upon our experience, than a line of light affects us, till its end impinges on our eye. Hence I cannot feel much interest in the mere question respecting the existence of a Devil; and must be excused for treating it as only an insignificant part of a subject vast and terrible.

Does, then, this second system resolve our difficulties, and altogether harmonize the perfections of God? Alas! the success is no greater than before. Why this circuitous method of producing a happy universe? Evil is called into being, as an instrument of good, in this world; and then is annihilated, by the addition of more evil, in another. If it be the great object of Providence to get rid of suffering and sin, if his government be an educative discipline for purifying the guilt, illuminating the ignorance, and destroying the misery of souls, must we not ask, why then were these things created? If God's providence be thus *against* them, why was it ever *for* them? And how are we to think of those agencies, as the work of his own hands, on which his whole administration is said to be aggressive? No answer can be given, except that the temporary operation of natural and moral evil was unavoidable,—the essential and only means of accomplishing results which all admit to be beneficent, especially the development and progress of mind, and the probationary discipline of character. It may be so; but, in this explanation, the benignity of God is again saved at the expense of his Omnipotence. If no other means were open to him than those which he has actually employed, his range of possibilities was mysteriously limited, his choice incomprehensibly narrowed; and he solved the problem of Creation under some restraining conditions. And no theory, which leaves this shadow of necessity lingering behind the throne of God, justifies its pretensions as the vindicator of his Power.

Scarcely does this system seem to be reconcileable with the Holiness of God. I confess myself unable to understand how a Being, who is held to be the prime cause of all the moral evil which the universe contains, can be regarded as morally perfect; or to imagine, if this be consistent with infinite purity, what phenomena would be inconsistent. It is not enough to say, that the evil is produced, by no means for its

own sake, but for ultimate good. Often, at least, does a human being do wrong on no other pretext; and the very plea admits, that God subordinates moral distinctions to some other good, and esteems some foreign benefit worth purchasing by the deed of sin. Is it urged, that the foreknowledge and infallible certainty of the Divine mind justify this, and that it is only because man wants the requisite discernment, that he is forbidden in his blindness to do evil, that good may come? Then it would seem that moral distinctions are intended only for the ignorant; and are, to an immeasurable extent, delusions of intellectual infancy, designed to vanish, or undergo unimaginable transformations, as our mental vision is enlarged. And if this be so, none of our ideas of obligation are applicable to God, and he passes beyond the range of our moral apprehension, reverence, and love. No; the language of piety becomes unmeaning, and the sanctity of religion is in danger of utter ruin, unless the divine sentiments of right and wrong are perceived to be akin to our own, recognising the same immutable differences, and spontaneously observing the same laws. Not even can we admit that he has created, and could change, the relations of right and wrong; that his will is the source of obligation, and by a command could make into a binding duty that which in itself is sin. Moral excellence is no creature of mere power, which he has created; for he is, and ever was, excellent himself, rendered venerable by intrinsic and unoriginated perfections; by holy sentiments, whose outward action, indeed, must be dated from the beginning of created things, but whose consciousness has been from everlasting. I dare not think, that the Providence of God largely consists in doing that, which would be guilt in man.

From this scheme then, not less than from the former, we fail to obtain satisfaction. It does not reconcile the faith of the conscience with the faith of the understanding; but simply prefers the latter, to the injury of the former, compromising

God's abhorrence of evil; and, for the sake of maintaining his sovereignty, making it his instrument. In fine, philosophy must make confession of its ignorance, and talk no more so exceeding proudly. This question of ages is too much for all its subtlety. Let us pass on to the doctrinal search of Scripture. Does it either reveal any new view of our subject, or determine our choice to either of the schemes we have reviewed?

II. Trinitarian theologians maintain, that the Bible reveals to us the existence of a created spirit of evil, with a host of subordinate associates in guilt; who seduced our first parents, and so introduced both the spiritual depravity and the mortality of our race; who has since tormented the bodies of men with divers diseases, afflicted their minds with some species of insanity, and corrupted their conscience with every variety of horrible and guilty thought; and who especially assailed the person, and withstood the kingdom of Christ, knowing that the Messiah's power would finally overthrow his own. In opposition to this statement, I submit, that in neither the Mosaic nor the Christian dispensation have we any revelation of the existence of such a being, or any doctrinal solution of the problem respecting the origin of evil. Let me not, however, be supposed to say, that no such beings as Satan, the fallen Angels, and demons, are named in Scripture. I do not pretend to fritter all these away into personifications and figures of speech. I have no doubt that some of the sacred authors believed in the real existence and agency of such beings; I have just as little doubt that others did not; and that the Hebrew conceptions on this subject underwent a regular development in the course of their history, no part of them having any origin in supernatural revelation, but the whole being either the result of natural speculation or a gift from foreign tribes. This will be thought very shocking by those who, maintaining the plenary inspiration of the Bible, cannot imagine that it contains any traces

of the notions and sentiments of its various times; and ca not think of admitting even an incidental allusion that is r an infallible oracle. But until it can be shown, that a pe son inspired is unable to form an opinion of his own; that has no ideas from education and position, no prepossessio in common with his age; that, from Moses to the John Patmos, every scriptural author is an unerring authority, n merely in faith and morals, but in cosmogony and physics, geology and astronomy, in natural history, physiology, met physics and medicine; we may venture to maintain, on t ground of historical evidence, that the belief in witchcraft a charms, in angels and devils with Chaldee names, in dem niacal possession and Satanic inflictions, may be no resu of revelation, but one of the natural traces of time and loc lity with which the Scriptures abound. There prevails, hov ever, great misapprehension respecting the ideas of th Scripture writers on these subjects; and especially, the co ception of a Devil is thought to pervade the whole Bible one unvarying form. With a view to rectify this mistake, will briefly notice the chief passages of the Hebrew a Greek Scriptures relating to this topic; adverting, in su cession, to the history of the fall; to the growth of the b lief both in Satan and exorcism; and to the temptation Christ.

(1.) It is impossible to conceive of a greater outrage upo an author's meaning, than is the common representation the Fall, on the account of that event in the Book of Genesi Not a trace, even of the faintest kind, does the original na rative contain of all that theologians tell us respecting th tempter, the curse, the recovery. The tempter was not a evil spirit, but a serpent, to whose natural and instinctiv cunning, and not to any diabolical instigation, the seducin thought is attributed: for "The serpent," it is said, "wa more subtle than all the beasts of the field."* The write

* Genesis iii. 1.

indeed, had not apparently any idea of such a being as Satan; for, throughout his five books, there is not a word in allusion to such a personage; though he records, I believe, more temptations, more trials of faith and duty, which it is thought the office of the evil one to administer, than all the rest of the Scriptures together. It is nothing to the purpose to say that, without preternatural possession, it is absurd to suppose that the serpent could speak, and become an agent in the transaction at all; for, on any view of the passage, the author ascribes to the creature the power both of speech and of walking: and to imagine that the Devil would betray himself by assuming so improbable a vehicle, and making a dumb reptile talk, is surely little consonant with the character of so subtle a diplomatist. The record affirms that, by way of punishment, the serpent was reduced to the reptile state, and compelled to crawl instead of walk;* and an author, whose imagination had reconciled itself to this conception, would feel no additional improbability in supposing the same occasion to have condemned the animal to silence. This has always been the interpretation of those Hebrew writers, who have received the account as literal history. Josephus, a man of learning and a priest, states, that "all animals at that period partook of the gift of speech with man;" that "the serpent lived on familiar terms with Adam and his wife;" and "from a malicious intention of his own, persuaded the woman to taste of the tree of knowledge;" that, in consequence, "God deprived the creature of speech and of the use of his feet."† If the account be considered as historical, this is its plain meaning; and the insertion in it of a powerful malignant spirit, is a mere fiction of later times.‡

* Genesis iii. 14, 15.

† Jos. Ant. lib. i. c. 1.

‡ The first trace of this fiction presents itself in the Apocryphal book of the Wisdom of Solomon, ii. 24; "Nevertheless, through envy of the Devil, came

Nor is the usual description of the results of the Fall, a mere [illegible] perversion of Scripture. The necessities of [illegible] to the man, the pangs of travail to the woman, and to both a [illegible] determination of the term of life, are all the effects of which the original speaks, and to which Josephus refers.* St. Paul adds to these the introduction of mortality: but neither in his writings, nor in any more authoritative place than the [illegible] of modern divines, do we find the least hint of any moral corruption entailed by the fall on the human constitution, or any penal woes prepared for our lapsed nature after death. Throughout the whole subsequent Scriptures, there are only three places in which the effects of the first transgression are mentioned:† all of these are in the epistles of Paul: two, out of the three, are mere passing allusions, not occupying a line: and in the remaining one, as well as in the others, *natural death* alone is said to have passed on the descendants of Adam; "not," as Mr. Locke justly remarks, "either actual or imputed sin," which, he says, "is evidently contrary to St. Paul's design here."‡ Between the guilt of men, and the fall of their progenitor, there did not exist the slightest connexion in the Apostle's mind; they are never once mentioned together. When he draws his fearful

death into the world." How difficult it appeared, even to the learned and imaginative Origen, to establish this interpretation on any sound scriptural authority, may be seen in the fact that he can quote in its behalf nothing better than an unknown Jewish work in the Greek language, entitled 'Ανάλψις τοῦ Μωσέως. In Rufinus's version of Origen's "Principles," occurs the following passage: "In Genesi serpens Evam seduxisse describitur; de quo in Ascensione Möysi, cujus libelli meminit in epistolâ suâ Apostolus Judas, Michael archangelus cum Diabolo disputans de corpore Möysi, ait, *a Diabolo inspiratum serpentem*, causam exstitisse prævaricationis Adæ et Evæ."—De Princip. lib. iii. c. 2. Though the learned Father does not hesitate to cite this book, for a theological purpose, he does not inform us of the grounds on which he was satisfied to invest it with divine authority.

* Genesis iii. 16—19.

† Rom. v. 12—20; 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22; 1 Tim. ii. 14.

‡ Paraphrase on Romans. Note on v. 12. See also Whitby in loc., to whom Mr. Locke refers.

pictures of the depravity of both Jews and Gentiles, he is wholly silent respecting the fall, describing all this corruption not as constitutional but as actual, not as the growth of a foul and incapable nature, but rather as the abuse and insult of one inherently noble.* And when again he speaks of the fall and its issues, he is silent about moral depravity, and dwells only on physical death. Never was there a writer more barbarously tortured, more ingeniously forced to speak in a spirit which he loved to withstand, than this glorious Apostle. Out of his own writings, by incredible perversion, his generous conceptions are condemned as heresies, and his favourite sentiments denounced as blasphemies.

"I will put enmity," says the book of Genesis, "between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."† Considered as a description of the mutual hostility and injuries of the race of venomous reptiles and the human species,—man naturally attacking the head of the creature, and the animal, especially among the naked feet of oriental climes, finding nothing in man so vulnerable as the heel,—a more vivid sentence can scarcely be conceived. Considered as a prophecy of Christ, ingenuity could construct nothing more obscure. And, accordingly, it is never once appealed to, as a prediction, either by the Messiah himself, or by any of the New Testament writers; and before the Advent, it had certainly failed to produce the proper effect of prophecy, and had not aided in preparing the minds of the Hebrews for the event. It is indeed acknowledged by "a strenuous advocate for this application of the passage," "that the expressions here used do not necessarily imply the sense thus attributed to them; and that there is no appearance of our first parents' having understood them in this sense, or that

* See Rom. i. 16; ii. 29; and iii. 9—23.

† Genesis iii. 15.

God intended they should so understand them."* If, then, this prophetic signification escaped the persons to whom the announcement was made, and the nation before whose eye it lay for ages, and the Christ himself of whom it spake, and the Evangelists and Apostles who proclaimed him to the world, our doubt of its reality can scarcely be deemed unwarrantable.

But it is, I believe, a misconception of the author, to treat this passage as a piece of history. Neither Moses, nor any other scriptural writer, professes to have been miraculously instructed in the events of the antediluvian world; and if they make no such pretension themselves, it is altogether gratuitous in us to make it for them. The slightest consideration must convince us, that all *natural* sources of information respecting so primitive a period must have ceased to exist, at least in any reliable form: and the earliest portions of the book of Genesis have every characteristic of that beautiful mythical composition, which is the first fruit of the literary activity of every simple-hearted nation, and which mingles together in one texture, tradition, fact, speculation, poetical conception, and moral truth. In this instance, the writer seems to have been oppressed by the feeling, that human peace and tranquillity were disturbed by the restless aspirings and inquisitive ambition of the mind. If man could but be content to take the good which God has spread within his easy reach, and not permit himself to pry into the possibilities of having more, his life might be spent as in a garden of the Lord, in the warmth of sunny days, and the light sleep of unhaunted nights. But he cannot repress his insatiable curiosity, his passion for the fruits of knowledge and dignity, of which Providence has given him the idea, but which have been set beyond his permitted reach; and

* Dr. T. Sherlock's Six Discourses on Prophecy, p. 80; as quoted in Mr. Wellbeloved's excellent note on the passage.

this thirst of his nature he resolves at all hazards to indulge; this godlike aspiration, imprisoned in a frame to which it is unsuited, chafes against his quiet, and abbreviates his days. Hence proceed the struggle and the toil of life; the thistle and the thorn which he gathers from a soil that might have yielded only flowers; hence, children are we all of care and sorrow; hence, by the sweat of the hardy brow we must live, and soon fret down existence into dust; not however, without our victory after all; for we subjugate the earth, and reign thereon.

Observe too, that Adam rules the woman; and the woman has a heel upon the serpent:—the last seduced is placed the highest; and the first corrupter sinks into a reptile. Our temptations are *beneath* us; and having once detected them, we are to rule them ever after. Once let the knowledge of good and evil be tasted, and the primitive equality of things, which put man and beast upon a level, is destroyed; all beings fall into the ranks of a moral gradation; and though none that have free will may escape a fall, he that is last to yield shall be the first to reign.

(2.) Neither then in the original account, nor in the scanty subsequent notices of the transgression in Eden, is there any disclosure of a Satanic existence. Let us rapidly follow down the course of Hebrew literature, and search in it for the first and successive indications of this belief. I have stated that the books of Moses are destitute of all trace of such a conception; nor can any thing at all corresponding to the popular idea of the Devil, be found in any part of the Old Testament. The name itself never once occurs; and it would be a great mistake to identify the Satan of the Hebrew Scriptures, with the Devil of the Greek.* The Satan of the former has a very uncertain personality. The name

* See Note B.

rather denotes an office, which any agent of Providence might be appointed to fill, than a definite individual being. Any person, performing the function of an accuser, or who prepares matter for accusation, by seducing men into evil,—any one acting the part of an adversary to another,—is called Satan. Thus David is called Satan to the Philistines;* a certain captain named Rezon was Satan to Israel;† the angel of Jehovah was Satan to Balaam;‡ nay, even Paul uses this singular expression, "Hymeneus and Alexander, I have delivered to Satan" (for what purpose, do you suppose), "*that they may be taught not to blaspheme.*" § No doubt this idea, at first vague and indefinite, gradually became individualized; and that which had been an appellative, passed into a proper name, yet without ever wholly losing its generic character.‖ At the commencement of the book of Job occurs its most distinct and definite use. It is there applied, not to a fallen Spirit, not to a repudiated subject of the celestial state, but to an angel near the throne, to a recognized minister of the Supreme Power, who appears in the courts above among "the Sons of God." He is represented as a general inspector and public prosecutor of the Divine government over

* 1 Samuel xxix. 4.
† 1 Kings xi. 25.
‡ Numb. xxii. 22.
§ 1 Tim. i. 20.

‖ "שטן (1.) *adversarius*; in antiquiori Hebraismo homo, ut in 1 Sam. xxix. 4; 2 Sam. xix. 23; 1 Reg. v. 4; xi. 14; xxiii. 25: in sequiori, post exilium Babylonicum, angelus malus sive *diabolus*, qui κατ' ἐξοχὴν *Satan* vocatur, Ps. cix. 6; Zach. iii. 1, 2; 1 Chron. xxi. 1. (2.) *circuitor*, qui civium motus observat; secundum quosdam, Hiob. i. 6, 8; ii. 1."—*Joh. Simonis Lex. Hebr. in verb.*

In Ps. cix. 6, and Zach. iii. 1, 2, there is, however, no reason to suppose that the word is used as a proper name. The former of the two passages is best rendered, "Let *an accuser* stand at his right hand:" and in explanation of the latter, Archbishop Newcome cites the following note from Dr. Blayney; "It appears to me most probable, that by Satan, or the Adversary, is here meant the adversaries of the Jewish nation in a body, or perhaps some leading person among them, Sanballat for instance, who strenuously opposed the rebuilding of the temple, and of course the restoration of the service of the sanctuary, and the re-establishment of Joshua in the exercise of his sacerdotal ministry."—*Newcome's Minor Prophets, in loc.*

man; going to and fro over the earth, by heavenly commission, to execute the probationary part of the great Ruler's will, and administer to mankind the severities which test their faith. In the earlier Hebrew writings, this office is said to be filled by no subordinate instrument: it is Jehovah himself who is represented as trying his servants,—as the personal cause of their afflictions, and author of their temptations. I recently heard the following passage from the first book of Chronicles adduced in proof of the agency of Satan in seducing men from their allegiance to God. "And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel."* Now it so happens, that this same event is recorded also in the much more ancient books of Samuel, where it is thus introduced: "And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and HE moved David against them to say, 'Go, number Israel and Judah.'"† What can more clearly mark the natural progress of opinion on this point? As the ideas of God became more elevated and refined, it was felt to be scarcely compatible with his perfections to seduce his children into violation of the duties he himself required: and the imagination at least, if not the understanding, was relieved by assigning that office, of hardening the heart and tempting the will, (which originally had been left with Jehovah himself,) to some interposing being, who might separate between God and guilt.

When we open the Apocrypha of the Old Testament, we perceive a complete change in this class of ideas. Even the latest written of the canonical books introduce us to several angelic beings, unknown to the earlier Scriptures,—as the Michael and Gabriel of Daniel. But in addition to these, we find in the Jewish Apocrypha, for the first time, the matured conception of the Prince of evil;‡ who is thenceforth

* 1 Chron. xxi. 1. † 2 Sam. xxiv. 1.

‡ Wisd. ii. 24; Tobit iii. 8.

represented in the scarcely consistent relations of creature and enemy of the Most High: and it is in this form that the notion presents itself to us in the New Testament writings. Now what is the inference from these facts? In the books of the ancient dispensation, this malignant Spirit does not yet appear: in the writings of the new dispensation, he is mentioned,—not as a novelty of revelation, but as long familiar to the mind of every reader. The origin then of the belief in his existence, must be sought between the close of the Hebrew inspiration and the opening of the Christian. And what had happened in this interval? The Jewish people had been in long and intimate relation with Persia: connected with it by political ties, and united by the sympathies of monotheism. The characteristic features of the Persian religion were,—its doctrine of a Spirit of Evil in perpetual enmity to the Supremely Good;—and its representation of a heavenly hierarchy, whose spirits were ranged in ranks of angels and archangels, and received their separate names. These ideas then naturally passed into the Jewish mind, with little change; except that the Evil Spirit was reduced to a somewhat lower station, in obedience to the stern Mosaic principle, of the absolute Monarchy of God.*

* On entering the creed of the Jews, this doctrine underwent another change, of which many traces are to be found in all their subsequent writings, and which throws light on several passages of the New Testament. It is thus stated by Dr. D. F. Strauss: "When that Satan who appears in the Persian religion as a wicked being inimical to mankind, passed into the Jewish faith, his character was accommodated to the Hebrew peculiarity, which confined to the people of Israel all that is good and worthy of humanity; and he was regarded as at once the special enemy of their nation, and the Lord of their Gentile foes. The interests of the Jewish people becoming concentrated in the person of the Messiah, it was natural that the Satan should be conceived of as the personal opponent of the Messiah." "Accordingly," adds this writer, "in the New Testament the idea of Jesus as the Messiah everywhere involves that of Satan as the adversary of his person and work." [1] We may well object to the unqualified

[1] Das Leben Jesu kritisch bearbeitet, § 55.

And as these notions became perfectly engrafted on the national faith of Israel, the founders of Christianity were educated in them; and they were permitted to appear by incidental allusion, and in conformity with the general sentiments of the country and the age, in the pages of history and correspondence, which the evangelists and apostles have left. Nor can I perceive, either how it can be proved, or why it should be desired, that God would annihilate from the understanding of his inspired servants, all the harmless ideas, foreign to their mission, which constituted the common stock of thought at the time, and gave them points of necessary sympathy and intellectual contact with the spirit of their generation. How slight the sanction which they give to some, at least, of these mythological imaginations, may be estimated by a single fact. The whole theory respecting fallen angels rests upon two verses,* each in one of the most doubtful of the New Testament writings: indeed the texts can scarcely be regarded as constituting two independent authorities; for the latter is little else than a repetition of the former; occurring in a portion of the second epistle of Peter, which, strangely enough, contains, the sentiments and even the language of a large part of the epistle of Jude. When such evidence as this is brought forward, as conclusive and infallible, I would respectfully ask our opponents, whether they seriously believe, on the authority of the same epistle, that Michael the archangel disputed with the Devil about the body of Moses? and as this is nowhere else mentioned, whether an express and personal revelation of the fact was imparted to St. Jude? If so, consistency would require them to maintain, that this

generalization comprised in this last remark, and therefore to many of the author's particular applications of it; and especially we must regard as unsuccessful his attempt to destroy the historical character of the narrative of our Lord's temptation; but no judicious interpreter will wholly neglect the suggestion which the passage contains.

* Jude 6; 2 Pet. ii. 4.

is one of the essential doctrines of the Gospel: for how much soever our natural and corrupt reason might be tempted to think the circumstance trivial, if true, it cannot really be otherwise than fundamental, if privately and explicitly revealed.*

From the foregoing remarks, the general principles, in conformity with which I would treat the question of demoniacal possessions, will be so evident, that it will be unnecessary to enter into any details. The precise relation to each other of the various orders of evil spirits in which the Jews believed, it is not possible to define. It is certain, however, that they made a distinction, which our common translation of the Scriptures has improperly obliterated, between demons and devils. The former were thought to be of only human rank, the souls of the wicked dead: and it was these only that were supposed to possess and afflict the bodies of the living. The latter were guilty angels, and had no agency assigned to them on earth, being kept in durance within the prisons of the unseen world. There was therefore the same difference between demons and devils, as with us between ghosts and fiends. Of the former, Beelzebub was considered as the chief; of the latter, Satan: and whether these beings were regarded as standing in any definite relation to each other, is uncertain; probably the Devil, as the Prince of darkness, was believed to be the ruler of all the powers of evil, whether human or angelic. Unlike his incarcerated compeers, Satan was permitted to be at large, and to practise his arts against mankind: all gentile kingdoms being absolutely his; and even the chosen people not protected wholly from his malignity, at least until the Messiah's reign, which was to commence with his dethronement. It may be observed by any careful reader of the gospels, that the evils of which he was

* See Note C.

held to be the author, are not the same that are ascribed to Beelzebub and his demons. Satan, and he only, was the moral seducer: and the physical calamities proceeding from him were only natural and intelligible diseases, regular enough to fall under the cognizance of science. The demons had, on the contrary, no concern with the conscience; and occasioned only the irregular and apparently preternatural maladies, which science deserted and left to the tender mercies of superstition;—of which epilepsy and insanity are the most remarkable examples.

Of this system of notions the evangelists were doubtless possessed. But that they held them on the tenure of unerring inspiration can by no means be shown. On the contrary, the natural causes which produced them can be so clearly detected in the prevalent sentiments of their age and country, that not the slightest pretext remains for referring them to express revelation. So far from requiring a miracle to excite these conceptions, we must admit, that nothing less than a miracle could have excluded them, familiar as they had been to the national mind from the time of its intercourse with Persia. Had the founders of Christianity never received any extraordinary mission, they would have entertained the conception of demoniacal possession; and its hold upon their thoughts must therefore be regarded as the result of natural prepossession, not of supernatural communication. A notion whose human origin can be distinctly traced, —which was shared by uninspired persons, and existed in the authors of our religion in their uninspired years,—has no claim to be considered as a part of Christianity, and is as open to doubt and examination as any other opinion of antiquity. To affirm that, were it not true, God must have blotted it from the mind of his messengers, is not only to overbear evidence with assertion, but to decide dogmatically on the obligations of Deity, and, with infinite presumption, to dictate the fit measure of his gifts. Till it can be shown,

that inspiration is co-extensive with omniscience, it must remain compatible with error.

The language of the Gospels then, respecting demoniacs, is not to be regarded as a condescending accommodation to popular prejudice; but as a genuine expression of the writers' own state of mind. There is no reason to doubt that the prevalent ideas were shared by the apostles themselves. By these did they interpret the facts which they witnessed: through the colouring of these, their minds beheld the miracles of Christ, and their own: and at the suggestion of these arose the language in which they have recorded the ministry of their Lord. All this has not the smallest effect on the truth and soundness of their testimony. They no doubt reported faithfully that which they *saw and heard*; only they tell us something more, adding a few phrases, disclosing also what they *thought*. Like all witnesses of simple mind, especially when telling that which awakens their wonder and affection, they mix up their statements of phenomena with notions of causation; and present us with a composite register of sensible impressions and mental interpretations. It should be our business, as we read, to call up before us the scene described; to see for ourselves the things visible, and hear the things audible, of which the record speaks; and we shall find that this effort will usually make a perfect and easy separation between the real and the merely ideal, between the permanent fact and the temporary explanation. When, for example, it is said, that the *demons* in a man possessed *spake* to Christ, of what are we to think? for what voice are we to listen? where are the lips from which the utterance flows?—Certainly it was from the organs of the poor *lunatic himself* that the sound must have proceeded: and modern language would describe this fact by saying, that *he* spake; and in thus believing we accept the whole *attestation* of the historian.

(3.) The same principle must be applied to the temptation

of Christ. No hint whatever is given, implying any visible appearance communing with Jesus; nor need we even suppose any audible voice addressing him.* The Evil Spirit, like God himself, was held to be invisible, and inappreciable by any human senses: and when *words* are attributed to him, they represent only the dialogue which he is supposed to hold with the silent and tempted heart. His whole guilty transactions indeed belonged, it was imagined, to the region of the mind; and his was a viewless and speech-

* Mr. Stowell, in his Lecture on the Personality and Agency of Satan (pp. 703, 704), intimates that probably no visible form presented itself to Jesus: and though strongly, and as it appears to me reasonably, objecting to the interpretation which resolves the whole temptation into a *vision*, he supposes, with more latitude than consistency of explanation, that the Devil "showed" to our Lord all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them,—not really and objectively,—but by means of "a glowing though *scenical representation*." The Lecturer does not state whether he conceives the solicitations of Satan to have been conveyed by the method of real and organic *talking*: but if, in the peculiar style of this narrative, the Tempter can be described as "*showing*" things without the presence of any visible objects, he may be described as "*saying*" things without the presence of any audible sounds. English orthodoxy, in conformity with the gross and hard materialism which pervades it, seems to have encouraged the idea, that all preternatural communications, whether diabolic or divine, with the human mind, must be made by articulate noises or sensible images; that the action of spirit on spirit is inconceivable; and a *revelation in silence and darkness a thing impossible*. Adverting to this prejudice, the admirable Barclay says, "We must not think his" (Abraham's) "faith was built upon his outward senses, but proceeded from the secret persuasion of God's spirit in his heart;"—"by which many times faith is begotten and strengthened without any of these outward and visible helps; as we may observe in many passages of the Holy Scriptures, where it is only mentioned, '*And God said*,' &c., '*And the word of the Lord came*' unto such and such, '*saying*,' &c. But if any one should pertinaciously affirm, *that this did import an outward audible voice to the carnal ear*, I would gladly know, what other argument such an one could bring, for this his affirmation, saving his own simple conjecture. It is said indeed, '*The Spirit witnesseth with our spirit*;' but not to our outward ears, Rom. viii. 16. And seeing the Spirit of God is within us, and not without us only, it speaks to our spiritual, and not to our bodily ear. Therefore I see no reason, where it's so often said in Scripture, '*The Spirit said*,' '*moved*,' '*hindered*,' '*called*,' such or such a one, to *do* or *forbear* such or such a thing, that any have to conclude, that this was not an inward voice to the ear of the soul, rather than an outward voice to the bodily ear. If any be otherwise minded, let them, if they can, produce their arguments, and we may further consider of them."—*Barclay's Apology for the true Christian Divinity, Prop. II.*

less wrestling with conscience on its throne. Whenever there fore the seductive assaults of Satan are recorded, the rea fact described is this; that internal moral conflicts have bee going on, and deluding thoughts have been passing, like th shadow of a dark Spirit, across the purer soul. And in suc case, the first and the only thing of which our consciousnes can be aware, is, the occurrence of these thoughts. T their antecedent source, our testimony cannot reach; an whether they are precipitated on us by some enemy fro without, or are of spontaneous origin within our own minds is a point accessible indeed to speculation, but beyond the contact of experience. Till they enter our nature, and so become a part of our personality, they are nothing and nowhere: and when they enter and we feel their torment, they are ours and no other being's. No one ever sees, hears, or feels, the Devil: he *perceives* simply the intrusion of sinful ideas, and *supposes* them to be the result of diabolic power. He experiences the temptation in reality; and refers it to the tempter in idea. And were this not true of Christ, as of ourselves, it would be false to say, that he "was tempted in all points as we are." The temptation of our Lord then, stripped of the dress which the historians have thrown around the central facts, was the natural struggle, by which he exchanged the imperfect, and local, and ambitious conceptions of the Messiah, which his cottage training in Nazareth had imparted,—for that pure, and self-sacrificing, and comprehensive interpretation of the office, which broke upon his solitude so awfully. That he learned, at Mary's knees, to cherish the common hope of his nation, in the form under which it prevailed among the peasantry, appears as little doubtful, as that he caught the language of his native fields. Yet it is certain that this early vision passed away; and that when he himself was called to fill the appointed office, he acted out a conception quite opposite to the dreams imparted to his childhood. Once he had mused on the widening glory

of Judæa; but he ended with announcing the prospect of its fall. Once he had exulted in the dignity and power of the coming messenger, who should break the oppression of his people, and set forth anew the triumph of their ancient Providence: he declared himself at length the meek prophet of penury, and woe and childhood. Once he had thought of what Jerusalem would be, when the temple should be the centre of the world's homage, and multitudes of all nations should throng its pavement, and its incense should rise in the pride of freedom, and its hymn spring upward on the wing of happy melody: but ere his work of life was finished, he taught a lowlier yet sublimer expectation, not of the compression of the world into the Hebrew worship,—but of the diffusion of that worship to cover the world; and revealed that secret shrine in every human heart, where emotions, purer than incense, may burn for ever, and tones sweeter than music be for ever breathed. This revolution of sentiment, this conflict, by which new thoughts of inspiration expelled the old ones inherited from education and reputed prophecy, constituted the temptation in the wilderness; nor was it possible that ideas the most divine, should thus burst the shell of custom and tradition, without a convulsion truly terrible. It would be easy, were it not irrelevant, to show how this hidden colloquy between the national prepossessions and the personal intuitions of our Lord's mind, would give rise to the separate scenes of which the temptation is said to have been composed. Possibly, however, the history, as it stands, is not the record of a single event, to which a fixed date can be assigned in his ministry: more probably, it gathers into one view a series of mental conflicts, distributed over his whole public life; the struggles between the accidental and the essential portions of his nature; between the national and the human: between an historical imagination trained amid the gorgeousness of pro-

phecy, and a heavenly conscience dwelling with the simplicity of God; between the conventional and the spiritual; between, in short, the superinduced faith contracted from time and place, and the inborn faith of a soul divine and free.

In the preceding notices of Scripture, no sanction is given to the interpretations, if such there be, which resolve Satan into a personification, treat the temptation as a vision or an allegory, and identify the demoniac phraseology with the common language of pathological description. I believe, indeed, that, wherever the Devil and his agency are named, the only *real fact* denoted is, the occurrence to some one of a moral temptation: and that, wherever demons are said to have been cast out, the only *historical event* described is, the cure of some physical or mental disease. But it appears to me absurd to deny, that the writers meant more than this; to doubt that they held the popular theory of such facts, and blended it naturally with their record; that they were sincerely under the influence of the existing system of demonology, and referred the seductions of sin to the personal activity of the malignant Spirit. Nowhere, however, do they pretend to set forth these ideas as gifts of preternatural revelation, but simply take them up as part of the common media of thought belonging to the age, and use them as the incidental colouring to their narrative of facts. In different parts of the Hebrew Scriptures, as we have seen, very different, and even inconsistent notions respecting the origin of of evil prevail: the conception of a powerful diabolic agent underwent a regular and natural development: and the system of pneumatology apparent in the Greek Scriptures is traceable to a foreign origin in an uninspired age. Hence we must conclude, that respecting the origin of evil, nothing doctrinal is specially revealed; that even in Palestine, the human mind has been left to grapple with this great problem

by its own natural forces; and that we rise from the page of Scripture, as from the speculations of wisdom and genius, with the difficulty yet unsolved.

By no means, then, can we attain to any theoretical certainty, or logical consistency of belief, on this great topic. Revelation is silent, and philosophy perplexed; and the controversy between the Religion of Conscience and the Religion of the Understanding, is undecided still. Let the framers of systems say what they will, the thing is deeper than our minds, and what can we know? Nothing remains, but to abandon hopelessly the speculative point of view, and treat the matter as an object, not of knowledge, but of trust; to regard it as a question to be decided by its bearings on duty, rather than its materials for debate. Whenever the means of attaining to objective truth do not exist, we can but rest in those views of things which most entirely accord with our best nature. If we cannot tell what is true of God, we yet may judge what is fittest for ourselves; what state of mind, what modes of thought, prepare us best for the work of life; what mental representation of existence most nobly sustains those fundamental moral convictions, which it is the end of Christianity to fix in our implicit faith and constant practice. To this arbitration we must submit our present doubts respecting the source of evil; and, while waiting to reach the realities of reason denied us now, accept, as our best truth, the conceptions which are most just to our moral nature and relations.

III. Let us then, for final decision, consult the practical spirit of Christianity, and ascertain to what view of the origin of sin it awards the preference. Is it well, for the consciences and characters of men, to consider God,—either directly or through his dependant Satan,—either by his general laws, or by vitiating the constitution of our first parents,—as the primary source of moral evil? *or*, on the contrary, to regard it as, in no sense whatever, willed by the

Supreme Mind, and absolutely inimical to his Providenc Are we most in harmony with the characteristic spirit of t gospel, when we call sin his instrument, or when we call his enemy? For myself, I can never sit at the feet of Jesu and yield up a reverential heart to his great lessons, witho casting myself on the persuasion, that God and evil are eve lasting foes; that never, and for no end, did he create it; th his will is utterly against it, nor ever touches it, but with a nihilating force. Any other view appears to be injurious t the characteristic sentiments, and at variance with the di tinguishing genius, of Christian morality.

(1.) Christianity is distinguished by the profound sent ment of *individual responsibility* which pervades it. All th arbitrary forms, and sacerdotal interpositions, and hereditar rights, through which other systems seek the divine favou are disowned by it. It is a religion eminently *personal*; es tablishing the most intimate and solitary dealings betwee God and every human soul. It is a religion eminently *natural*; eradicating no indigenous affection of our mind, distorting no primitive moral sentiment; but simply consecrating the obligations proper to our nature, and taking up with a divine voice the whispers, scarce articulate before, o the conscience within us. In this deep harmony with our inmost consciousness of duty, resides the true power of our religion. It subdues and governs our hearts, as a wise conqueror rules the empire he has won; not by imposing a system of strange laws, but by arming with higher authority, and administering with more resolute precision, the laws already recognised and revered.

This sense of individual accountability,—notwithstanding the ingenuities of orthodox divines on the one hand, and necessarian philosophers on the other,—is impaired by all reference of the evil that is in us to *any source beyond ourselves*. To look for a remoter cause than our own guilty wills,—to contemplate it as a Providential instrument, whe-

ther we trace it to Adam, to Satan, or directly to God, bewilders the simple perceptions of conscience, and throws doubt on its distinct and solemn judgments. The injury may be different in character, according to the particular system we adopt: but *any* theory which provides the individual moral agent with participating causes of his guilt, offends and weakens some one of the feelings essential to the consciousness of responsibility.

There is no persuasion, for example, more indispensable to this state of mind, and, consequently, no impression which Christianity more profoundly leaves upon the heart, than that of the *personal origin and personal identity of sin*,—its individual, incommunicable character. Our own secret souls, and that divine gospel which confirms all their sincere decisions, alike declare that *my* sin cannot be *your* sin; that by no compact, even by no miracle, can any exchange of responsibilities, or transfer of moral qualities, be effected. What indeed is guilt in its very nature, but a violation of some venerated rule of action,—a contravention of our own sentiments of equity, truth, purity, or generosity? and what is the guilty mind, but a system or habit of desire, which successfully resists the control of reason and conscience? That mind which is the seat of the delinquent will,—which hears the remonstrances of right, and heeds them not,—is the sole proprietor of the sin, deriving it from none, imparting it to none: its dwelling is in his volition; and unless that can cease to be his, the criminality can admit of no alienation. He may have accomplices indeed: but they are so many additional agents, each with his separate amount of guilt, and not partners among whom his one act of free-will is distributed. The trains of thought and emotion, the adjustment of tastes and affections, are different in every soul: each has its own moral complexion; each, its separate moral relations; each, its distinct responsibility in the sight of God. In no sense is the gift or transfer of character more

possible, than a barter of genius, or an interchange of sensation. God may call new life into existence, and determine what its consciousness shall be: he may annihilate life, and plunge its memory and experience into nothing: but to shift the feelings and aims which constitute the identity of one being into the personality of another, is no more possible, than to alter the properties of a circle, or to cancel departed time.

To trifle in any way with this plain and solemn principle, to invent forms of speech tending to conceal it, to apply to moral good and ill, language which assimilates them to physical objects and exchangeable property, implies frivolous and irreverent ideas of sin and excellence. The whole weight of this charge evidently falls on the scheme, which speaks of human guilt as an hereditary entail; a scheme which shocks and confounds our primary notion of right and wrong, and, by rendering them impersonal qualities, reduces them to empty names. No construction can be given to the system, which does not pass this insult on the conscience. In what sense do we share the guilt of our progenitor? His concession to temptation did not occur within our mind, or belong in any way to our history. And if, without participation in the *act* of wrong, we are to have its *penalties*,—crimes in the planet Saturn may be expected to shower curses on the earth; for why may not justice go astray in space, as reasonably as in time? If nothing more be meant, than that from our first parents we inherit a constitution *liable* to intellectual error and moral transgression;—still, it is evident, that, *until* this liability takes actual effect, no sin exists, but only its possibility; and *when* it takes effect, there is just so much guilt and no more, than might be committed by the individual's will: so that where there is *no* volition, as in infancy, cruelty only could inflict punishment; and where there is *pure* volition, as in many a good passage of the foulest life, equity itself could not withhold approval.

In whatever way, then, you define this hypothesis, it directly denies the personal character and personal identity of sin, and thus enfeebles the most essential element comprehended in the sentiment of responsibility. The practical result will inevitably be, a system of false views and fictitious feelings, with respect both to our own characters, and to those of our fellow-men. That which can be vicariously incurred, or vicariously removed, cannot be guilt; cannot therefore, be sincerely felt as such; can awaken no true shame and self-reproach, and draw forth no burning tears when we meet the eye of God. It is a shocking mockery to call sorrow for an ancestor's sin by the name of penitence, and to confound the perception (or, as it is termed, 'application,') of Christ's holiness with the personal peace of conscience: the one can be nothing else than moral disapprobation, attended by the sense of personal injury; the other, moral approval, attended by the sense of personal benefit: and mean and confused must be the sentiments of duty in a mind which can mistake these for the private griefs of contrition, and the serenity of a self-forgetful will. Only counterfeit emotions, and self-judgments half sincere, can consistently arise from a faith which mystifies the primitive ideas of moral excellence, and destroys all distinct perception of its nature. It is always with danger that we turn away from the *natural* hand-writing of God upon the conscience: from heedless eyes the divine symbols fade away; unless, indeed, in some preternatural awakening of our sight, they blaze forth once again, to tell us that the kingdom of true greatness hath departed from us. Let each consider his own life as an indivisible unit of responsibility, no less complete, no less free, no less invested with solemn and solitary power, than if he dwelt, and always had dwelt, in the universe alone with God. There is confided to him, the sole rule of a vast and immortal world within; whose order can be preserved or violated, whose

peace secured or sacrificed, by no foreign influence. We cannot, by ancestral or historical relations, renounce our own free-will, or escape one iota of its awful trusts. No faith which fails to keep this truth distinct and prominent, no faith which shuffles with the sinner's moral identity, contains the requisites of a "doctrine according to godliness." It must pervert, moreover, our estimates of others' characters, no less than of our own. If guilt can be hereditary,—guilt meriting infinite and indiscriminate punishment,—it must be universal: and whether we see it or not, we must believe it to exist, with no appreciable variation of degree, in every human heart. Thus it becomes a prime duty to regard every thing in life, except its wretchedness, every thing in human nature, except its displays of foulness and of ruin, as a delusion and a cheat. We strongly protest against this miserable distrust of our best and truest perceptions. We maintain the intelligible and appreciable character of all moral qualities, in opposition to all schemes which make distinction between natural and theological excellence, and which propose imaginary standards of right, different from those that recommend themselves to a discerning conscience. Sin is no mysterious thing, no physical poison, no taint in the blood, which may lurk venomously within us, giving no symptom, and exciting no consciousness, of its presence. However insidious in its approaches, and subtle in its manifestations, vigilance only is needed to detect it: its stealthiness affords, indeed, a sound reason for circumspection; but not for superstitious horror at its possible existence, without discoverable trace, in ourselves or others. To look on the spectacle of vice, and not feel abhorrence, indicates a depraved state of sentiment:—to look on the spectacle of virtue, and believe it sin, to witness all the outward expressions of goodness and suspect interior corruption, to be invited by natural emotion to moral admiration, and, by theological stimulants, to galvanise the heart into loathing (or even "pity") instead, im-

plies a falsehood of conscience no less malignant. Let me not be told that, in thus speaking, we assign too high a value to mere external moralities, which are but treacherous indications of character, and may be the visible fruit of various and dubious motives. We never cease to teach, that no Epicurean respectabilities, no conformity with conventional rules of order, can satisfy the claims, or afford any of the peace of duty, unless they be the native growth of a perceptive, devout, and loving heart:—that it is not in the hand which executes, but in the soul which devises and aspires, in the secret will which makes sacrifice of self, in the conscience which grapples with temptations and overmasters fears, that true and immortal virtue dwells; since acts are evanescent, while the affections are eternal. But it is monstrous to infer from this superficial character of outward morality, that there is probably no substratum of genuine goodness. Nay, it is a mean and degrading scepticism which distrusts, without assignable cause, the reality of any of the symptoms of excellence; is tempted by theories of divinity to insinuate that they are an empty semblance; and plies its pious ingenuity to blacken the great human heart. He that is pledged to make out a case against mankind at large, must find of difficult attainment that charity that "hopeth all things and believeth all things." How blunted must be the delicacy of moral perception, where the gradations of excellence are swept away into the dark abyss of universal depravity! and to effect this reduction of all minds to the same level, what vehement distortion, what wretched sophistries, what devotional scandal and romance, must become habitual! How much less place for delusion and insincerity is there, when we maintain a reverential faith in the natural moral sentiments, repress no generous admiration, disbelieve no genuine expression of disinterestedness and integrity, and instead of whining over guilt, dare to bless God with a manly voice, for all varieties of noble virtue!

Thus does the habit of tracing sin beyond the individual will to a progenitor, spread confusion over the moral perceptions, by mystifying the nature of guilt, and destroying that feeling of its personal character and identity which belongs to the Christian sentiment of responsibility.

By a different and directer method the same tendency operates, when we refer our temptations to the agency of the Devil, rather than to our descent from Adam. An invisible power, foreign to ourselves, is held chargeable, to an undefined extent, with the evil of our own wills; and the conscience can as ill bear the present distribution, as the past transmission of its guilt. It is said indeed, that man is not "less culpable, because Satan seduces him, and blinds his mind," since there is no power on earth or hell to *compel* him to transgress; that he is a willing captive, and no more to be excused than when a human accomplice entices him to crime, without (it is admitted) relieving him of any portion of his criminality.* But the cases are obviously not parallel. Man stands up before his fellow man, equal with equal; his weapons are fairly measured against his danger, by the great Arbiter himself; and therefore is he summoned to close with his temptations, and condemned as a traitor if he yields or flies. And should it ever be otherwise,—should the feeble-minded and inexperienced be misled by the cunning of the strong-headed and practised seducer, the instinctive justice of mankind mitigates its sentence, and commiserates the fall. With how much greater force, then, must this palliation be felt, when the Tempter is admitted to be "possessed of capacity and power immensely surpassing ours,"†—a "master-spirit" of majestic intellect, with whom we are as an infant in the giant's grasp! With such a being, the broken energy, the purblind vigilance, of a fallen man, can hardly be expected to cope; at least they will be induced, in so plausible

* Mr. Stowell's Lecture, p. 713. † Ibid. p. 695.

a case, to *esteem themselves* unfairly matched against so exalted a competitor. While it were earnestly to be desired that the wretched conscience should be allowed no evasion, and for awhile no alleviation, under the condemning sentence of its memory and its God,—this doctrine calls up, inevitably and reasonably, the feeling of a divided criminality, of which the weaker nature has the smaller share.

These tendencies, so far as they have been truly stated, must continue to act, so long as we trace the evil that is in us to *any* foreign agent. Hence it appears impossible to defend the doctrine of Philosophical Necessity,—which presents God to us as the author of sin and suffering,—from the same charge of invading the sense of personal responsibility. Not that we are for a moment to sanction the vulgar error which confounds this scheme, in its theoretical structure and practical effects, with the system of fatalism; or to imagine, that an abdication of all free-will, and a total indifference to moral distinctions, would be its proper and consistent results. Though, however, it leaves room for individual pursuit, and motive to individual perfection, one of its chief and most vaunted features undoubtedly is, the encouragement which it affords to the *passive virtues*: and it will be found, I greatly fear, that it is their *passiveness*, more than their *virtuousness*, which puts them under the protection of this doctrine. Doubtless, he who can look on all men as the instruments of heaven, and recognize in their mutual injuries and crimes the chosen methods of the Divine government, must learn submission to many a triumph of wrong, and consider anger against the profligate and oppressor as insubordination against God. He who is haunted by the immutability of things, and feels himself locked in with the universal mechanism, will chafe himself with no rash spirit of resistance, nor vainly thrust his hand against the fly-wheel of nature. He who believes that all things are right, that absolute evil does not exist, that whatever men may be, and whatever they may

do, nothing could possibly be better, must needs disco
that his own wishes are no criterion of good, and look wi
a contented eye over the whole surface of the past, as w
as a serene trust on the prospect of the future. Nor c
there be any self-exaggeration in a mind conscious of p
sessing but an infinitesimal fraction of the universal power,
and even that little wielded and directed by an uncontrollal
sovereignty, that turns the hearts of men whithersoever
pleaseth. Complacency with every lot, resignation to
events, forbearance under injury, an equal tenderness for
men, and the lowliest attitude before God, are the unque
tionable results of this religious philosophy. But all this
attained by a process which, I would submit, the moralist
bound to regard as illegitimate;—by an appeal to extern
mechanical necessity, rendering any thing but these states
mind intellectually improper; not by any considerations
duty, or any perception of their *intrinsic obligation*. Th
whole efficacy of the system is negative, not positive. I
prostrates and destroys the turbulent elements of our nature
and its quietude is the residue left by their exhaustion: i
crumbles beneath us the heights of passion, and deposits u
upon a placid level beneath the infinite expanse. Its cha
racteristic dispositions are reached by the sacrifice of th
feelings which are distinctively *moral*:—the feelings, that is
of which right and wrong acts and propensities are the ap
propriate objects;—the feelings of approbation and aversion
which recognize merit and demerit, and impel to praise an
blame. The Necessarian sees, neither in himself nor others
any good or ill desert to justify such feelings: he regard
natural and moral qualities in the same light,—contempla
ting benevolence as a species of health, and selfishness a
akin to disease: if he utters censure or applause, it is no
from an impulse in himself, but *for* an effect upon their ob
ject. In his love to men moral distinctions have no place
for as their sins justify no alienation, their virtues give n

claim to admiration: he loves them apart from the perceptions of conscience,—without veneration,—without praise,—by the mere force of the sympathies which take interest in sentient beings as capable of happiness and misery:—loves them, may we not say, because there is no cause for hate; resentment, impatience, disgust, being out of place towards creatures who are what they were meant to be, nothing remains but to include them in his complacency. Nor does the *humility* which this system inculcates, bear the true and Christian stamp. It is not the irrepressible aspiration after moral perfection, the pursuit of an image in the conscience infinitely beautiful and great, the devoted worship of the holy, good, and true, which draw forth tears of contrition for the past, and dwarf the attainments of the present, though reckoning their thousand victories; but it is rather a sense of physical and mental insignificance, which annihilates all worth except such as we may derive from sharing the regards of God: it is not a perception of want of merit in our character, but a consciousness of incapacity for it in our nature.

And who could fairly realize the fundamental idea of this scheme, without losing all confidence in his own moral convictions, and constantly distrusting his best feelings as delusions? For does he not believe, that whatever is brought to pass is absolutely right and best, and that any different view of it is an illusion incident to our human point of sight? The optimist casts his eye over the past, and can see no blot upon the retrospect: yet does it contain innumerable things,—woes and crimes the most deplorable,—which, ere they happened, were repugnant to his worthiest desires, and to be encountered by the most strenuous resistance of duty. Is he then to look at these objects, up to the last moment of the present, as utterly evil; and from the first moment of the past, as indisputably best? Is he to set up a two-faced sentiment, gazing with mutable and discriminative expres-

sion on things approaching, but with unvaried complacen on things departed? Is it possible, that actions and char ters can change their complexion by mere migration in tin or was it altogether a mistake to think so ill of the iniquit which, having been summoned into existence, must alw have appeared eligible in the view of God? These p plexities must perpetually arise to a mind which uses *t* standards of good; the *moral*, which approves the *rig* and the *eventual*, which reveres the *past*. The latter inc santly contradicts the former, and insinuates that it is blind guide, aiming at that which the All-wise will refuses achieve. And thus our theorist, *in so far as he is true to principles*, would lapse into scepticism of his moral jud ments; into a hesitating veneration for the oracles of dut a suspicion that they may inculcate provisional superstition rather than eternal truths. It must be difficult to uni pious acquiescence in the guilt of others, with uncompr mising resistance to our own.

In short, the contemplations presented by this doctrin do not appear to be favourable to *active* excellence: risin too far, and embracing too much, they quit the contact o this green earth, and lose sight of the interval between th quiet vales where virtue walks, and the giddy heights it ma not tread. The soul, rendered conscious more of the im mensity around it, than of the obligations upon it, lies still without a passion, without a fear,—venturing an approac to the benignity more than to the energy of God. Perhaps i is the tendency of all systems which most amply spread fort the Divine Infinitude, to be less occupied with the concep tion of the Divine Holiness: perhaps the mind intensel occupied with the idea of one solitary Power, absorbing a subordinate agencies, and willing every change that render space or time perceptible, has all its strongest impulses, bot moral and sympathetic, suppressed in the abyss of mystery and the distinction between different beings and differen

acts appears, in so vast a view, too trivial to be worthy of deep emotion and resolute volition. Certain it is, that the oriental religions which have encouraged this sublimity of devotion and self-annihilation in the Deity, have not been remarkable for the formation of a sound and vigorous type of moral character. Indeed we have seen that God himself, the supreme centre of reverence, no longer remains, under the Necessarian representation, a really *holy* object of thought. If we are to admit no possibility of resisting his will, and proclaiming him the Only Cause, to drown all other powers in his immensity, it becomes impossible to feel that he has any paramount regard to moral distinctions: he cannot share our feelings towards human guilt, for it is his work: he objects to no amount of vice, provided it issues in enjoyment: and not one libertine, or traitor, or murderer, could his purposes have spared. To reconcile us to this dreadful thought, we are reminded of his benevolence, which will bring all things to a glorious result. But how can we discern any sanctity in a benevolence so indiscriminating in its instruments? Must all our various apprehensions of God, the supremely good and supremely fair, shrink into this one, of ultimate-happiness Maker, by no means fastidious in his application of means, but secure of producing the end? Must the harmony of the Divine perfections lapse into this dull monotone? It can hardly be well for our conscience to worship a Being whom we could not imitate without guilt: or, if it be said, that we may imitate his ultimate aim, though not his intermediate methods,—what is this but to admit that our moral sympathies with him must be postponed to the end of time?

This system, then, like others which trace sin to causes beyond the individual will, does not appear to foster that deep reverence for moral distinctions, and sense of personal responsibility, which eminently characterize practical Christianity. It is favourable indeed to the passive virtues, which

copiously to both. The doctrine of retribution being a solemn truth, appears with all its native force in the teachings of Christ, and arms many of his appeals with a persuasion just and terrible. But never was there a religion (containing these motives at all) so frugal in the use of them; so able, on fit occasions, to dispense with them: so rich in those inimitable touches of moral beauty, and tones that penetrate the conscience, and generous trust in the better sympathies, which distinguish a morality of the affections. In Christ himself, where is there a trace of the obedience of pious self-interest, computing its everlasting gains, and making out a case for compensation, by submitting to infinite wisdom? In his character, which is the impersonation of his religion, we surely have a perfect image of spontaneous goodness, unhaunted by the idea of personal enjoyment, and, like that of God, unbidden but by the intuitions of conscience, and the impulses of love. And what teacher less divine ever made such high and bold demands on our disinterestedness? To lend out our virtue upon interest,—to "love them only who love us," he pronounced to be the sinners' morality; nor was the feeling of duty ever reached, but by those who could "do good, hoping for *nothing* again," except that greatest of rewards to a true and faithful heart, to be "the children of the Highest," who "is kind unto the unthankful and the evil." In the view of Jesus, all dealings between God and men were not of bargain, but of affection. We must surrender ourselves to him without terms; must be ashamed to doubt him who feeds the birds of the air, and, like the lily of the field, look up to him with a bright and loving eye; and he, for our much love, will pity and forgive us. In his own ministry, how much less did our Lord rely for disciples on the cogency of mere proof, and the inducements of hope and fear, than on the power of moral sympathy, by which every one that was of God naturally loved him and heard his words;* by which the good shepherd

* John viii. 42, 47.

knew his sheep, and they listened to his voice, and follow
him;* and without which no man could come unto him, f
no spirit of the Father drew him.† No condition of discipl
ship did Christ impose, save that of "faith in him;" absolu
trust in the spirit of his mind; a desire of self-abandonme
to a love and fidelity like his, without tampering with exp
diency, or hesitancy in peril, or shrinking from death.

There is, then, a wide variance between the genius
Christianity, and that philosophy which teaches, that all m
must be bought over to the side of goodness and of God, l
a price suited to their particular form of selfishness and a
petite for pleasure. Our religion is remarkable for the lar
confidence it reposes on the disinterested affections, and th
vast proportion of the work of life it consigns to them. An
in thus seeking to subordinate and tranquillize the prudenti
feelings, Christ manifested how well he knew what was i
man. He recognized the truth, which all experience declare
that in these emotions is nothing great, nothing loveable, no
thing powerful; that their energy is perpetually found inca
pable of withstanding the impetuosity of passion; and tha
all transcendant virtues, all that brings us to tremble or t
kneel, all the enterprises and conflicts which dignify history
and have stamped any new feature on human life, have had
their origin in the disinterested region of the mind; in affec-
tions, unconsciously entranced by some object sanctifying and
divine. He knew, for it was his special mission to make all
men feel, that it is the office of true religion to cleanse the
sanctuary of the secret affections, and effect a regeneration
of the heart. And this is a task which no direct *nisus* of the
will can possibly accomplish, and to which, therefore, all
offers of reward and punishment, operating only on the will,
are quite inapplicable. The single function of volition is *to
act*; over the executive part of our nature it is supreme; over

* John x. 14, 27. † John vi. 44.

the emotional it is powerless; and all the wrestlings of desire for self-cure and self-elevation, are like the struggles of a child to lift himself. He who is anxious to be a philanthropist, is admiring benevolence, instead of loving men; and whoever is labouring to warm his devotion, yearns after piety, not after God. The mind can by no spasmodic bound seize on a new height of emotion, or change the light in which objects appear before its view. Persuade the judgment, bribe the self-interests, terrify the expectations, as you will, you can neither dislodge a favourite, nor enthrone a stranger, in the heart. Show me a child that flings an affectionate arm around a parent, and lights up his eyes beneath her face, and I know that there have been no lectures there upon filial love; but that the mother, being loveable, has *of necessity* been loved; for to genial minds it is as impossible to withhold a pure affection, when its object is presented, as for the flower to sulk within the mould, and clasp itself tight within the bud, when the gentle force of spring invites its petals to curl out into the warm light. As you reverence all good affections of our nature, and desire to awaken them, never call them duties, though they be so; for so doing, you address yourself to the will; and by hard trying no attachment ever entered the heart. Never preach on their great desirableness and propriety; for so doing, you ask audience of the judgment; and by way of the understanding no glow of noble passion ever came. Never, above all, reckon up their balance of good and ill; for so doing, you exhort self-interest; and by that soiled way no true love will consent to pass. Nay, never talk of them, nor even gaze curiously at them; for if they be of any worth and delicacy, they will be instantly looked out of countenance and fly. Nothing worthy of human veneration will condescend to be embraced, but for its own sake: grasp it for its excellent results,—make but the faintest offer to use it as a tool, and it slips away at the very conception of such insult. The functions of a healthy body go on, not by knowledge of phy-

siology, but by the instinctive vigour of nature; and you wi no more brace the spiritual faculties to noble energy and tru life, by study of the uses of every feeling, than you can trai an athlete for the race, by lectures on every muscle of ever limb. The mind is not voluntarily active in the acquisitio of any great idea, any new inspiration of faith; but passive fixed on the object which has dawned upon it, and filled i with fresh light.

If this be true, and if it be the object of practical Chris tianity, not only to direct our hands aright, but to inspire ou hearts; then can its ends never be achieved by the mere force of reward and punishment; then no system can prove its sufficiency, by showing that it retains the doctrine of retribution, and must even be held convicted of moral incompetency, if it trusts the conscience mainly to the prudential feelings, without due provision for enlisting the co-operation of many a disinterested affection.

To this objection must any scheme be liable, which represents the Creator as having made choice of the instrumentality of evil. I freely admit, that no one urges the *personal* motives to duty with more closeness and force than the Necessarian. Maintaining, with the utmost strictness, the connexion of moral cause and effect, teaching the alliance of happiness with excellence, and of misery with vice, by a law inexorable as fate, he convinces us, that every concession to temptation, every relaxation of conscientious effort, is an addition of wretchedness to our future lot; that when the evil volition has once passed, no fortuity can provide evasion, nor any mercy give us shelter; that on the decisions of our will is suspended whatever can make our everlasting destination blessed. But his doctrine goes on to assure us, that it is only to ourselves that our sins create any clear increase of suffering; they are a part of the best possible system, designed for the general good; and shown, by their occurrence, to be clear benefits to the world. No love of our fellow-man, then, can

be engaged in behalf of duty; let conscience say what it will, we hold no power, and incur no risk, of creating injury to others; and our sympathies with them cannot reasonably determine any moral choice. No love of God can tender help to our feeble virtue: for he is not "grieved in our sins;" and whether, in our conflicts, we succumb or conquer, the issue is well-pleasing in his sight. He appears to sustain a relation, not of concern, but of indifference, to our choice; and the idea of him, as spectator of the strife, inspires no courage, and brings no victory. If it be urged, that these considerations are of too high and abstract a kind to influence us in practice, and that to us our misconduct must always appear injurious to men, and offensive to God; what is this but to allow the unfitness of the doctrine to our minds, and to say, that it is harmless, in proportion as it remains unrealized? It is a poor plea for the value of a system to exclaim, "Never mind its threatened mischiefs, conscience is too strong for them." The point at which the present argument rests is this, that *in so far as the doctrine operates,* it dismisses all but the prudential feelings from the service of duty.

Our conclusion is evident. The spirit of practical Christianity gives a double suffrage against the scheme which makes moral evil the *instrument* of God; and bids us regard it as his *enemy*. Revelation allies itself with the primitive religion of the conscience.

To the theoretic question, still urged by our wonder and solicitude, "But *whence* this foe?" it has been already said, that no answer can be given. All the ingenuities of logic and of language, leave it a mystery still: and it is better to stand within the darkness in the quietude of faith, than vainly to search for its margin in the restlessness of knowledge. Were we compelled, for relief of mind, to select *some* definite method of representing the case to our apprehensions, I know not any simpler or better conception than that of the ancient Platonists;—that the process of creation

consisted, not in the origination of matter itself out of nc thing, but in the production of form, order, beauty, organ zation, life, sentiency, out of matter,—in making it the r sidence of mind, the receptacle of experience, and the se vitor of souls: that the Divine hand has manifested illimi able skill, and the Divine love infinite versatility, in the u and application of the original material; but that, as it the negative opposite to his positive perfections, its unsu ceptibility of life and spirit has occasioned the portion evil which deforms the universe, and which, however varie and reduced, and, in the higher gradations of being, attenuate to the verge of extinction, cannot be utterly annihilated From the large proportion of visible evil, natural and moral that is traceable to disorganization and its related changes this view is easily apprehended, and may indeed be detected in many common forms of thought and speech. If it be not true, no better substitute for the truth is within our reach. It limits the power of God no more than the rival scheme: for were we to say, that he became the author of evil, as the *unavoidable* means of ulterior benefits, we should admit, that *only on these terms* was the contemplated good producible, even by him whom, in relation to all our measures of force, we justly call Omnipotent. It is impossible to escape, and therefore better to confront, the idea of a NECESSITY, restricting the conditions within which the Divine goodness operates;—a necessity, mysterious, but not dreadful; not great enough to be subversive of faith, nor trivial enough to be reasoned out of sight. I know not why our thoughts should not find a residence for this necessity, rather in the materials awaiting the Creative hand, than in any immaterial laws, under the mystic title of "the Nature of things," or (in other words,) any dark Fate behind the throne. But in saying this, I only propose to *state the problem* in the most salutary form, and by no means to offer a solution: mere pretension to ideas, where truly we have none, only excludes

s from the benefits (which are many) of our allotted portion f ignorance. I have no sympathy with the confident and ogmatic spirit, which exclaims, "Let the counsel of the Holy One draw nigh, that we may know it;" and would nly protest against systems that "call evil good, and good vil," that "put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter."

Sin, then, in the sight of God and all good men, is to be esteemed an evil, absolutely and everlastingly. We may rally the *whole* power of our nature against it: for it destroys our personal security; it irremediably wounds our brother; and it puts us in dreary alienation from our Father and our Judge. We may let loose our aversion to all that offends the conscience, and without metaphysical hesitancy, visit it with uncompromising hate; for so doing, we are indignant with no instrument of Deity; nor do we fall into any sentiment at variance with his. We may yield, with entire self-precipitation, to the love of whatever things are pure and true and good; never fearing that our affections will become too exclusive for the enlightened children of the Highest. When we look into the darker chambers of our soul, and discern, asleep or awake, the powers of selfishness, malice, jealousy,—we see therein no nursery of discipline, where God presides to train us ultimately well; but the dreadful dwelling of our familiar fiend who wrestles in apostacy with God;—the palace of the penal furies that at once tempt and torture us, a place severed by a whole universe from Heaven;—the inner Hell of our immortal nature, so plenteous in solitary agonies, that the addition of outward flames populous with tormented beings would only refresh us with pity for their woes. The fever of desire, the fires of revenge, the gnawing of remorse, still busy in our immortality; the shame of resuscitated memories; the passionate yearning after strength with the prostrate consciousness of weakness; the strangeness and desolation of empty minds and heated appetites carried to the assemblage of the

skies, and gazed on by the pitying eye of a Divine b alienated purity,—Oh! what flames can burn into tender seats of anguish than these? And so far from planning ar willing the lapse of any into such guilt and suffering, tl Great Ruler never ceases to resist to the last, all such delay his benediction and frustration of his desire. He dwells al solutely apart from all creative contact with the evil whic we are bound to abhor: he comes before us as a being ur ambiguously Holy; not in any ultimate and scarce intelligibl way, but in our plain human sense. His name must be re served as the exclusive receptacle of all the excellence an beauty, the majesty and tenderness, the purity and justice of which our minds can gather together the ideas. It is n figure of speech, that there is *joy in heaven* over the sinne that repenteth: that part at least of heaven that dwells be low and hides itself within our hearts, that portion of Goc that expresses itself through the sanctities of our nature yields to our moral restoration not only a ready welcome but a mysterious help. When fear has performed its proper and only function on a responsible being,—which is, not to create holiness, but to arrest guilt; when it has summoned us, like the prodigal, to ourselves again; when it has brought the mad career to halt, and left us weeping, humbled, pros- trate in the dust, crying, "Lord, help us, we perish;"— then the Divine Spirit dawns on the gloom of our self- abasement, and refreshes us with the delicious light of a new and purer love: instead of the vain strivings of an ener- vated will, the restless beating of mere prudence against the iron bars of corrupt desire, the gates of the soul are burst silently open by some angel affection, and we are free! And shall we not, with most devout allegiance, follow our Divine Emancipator? The great work, which his holy energy is thus ready to carry on within us, he may be discerned con- ducting every where without us. On the theatre of the uni- verse he is himself engaged to grapple eternally with Evil

and hurl it from the higher portion of his abode. And so, he waits, with his inspiring sympathy, to hail every victory of our free-will: and by all the filial love we bear him, by the generous fear of estrangement from his spirit, by the hope of growth in his similitude, we are summoned to enter the field of moral conflict,—to stir up the noble courage of our hearts, and in the Lord's own might, do battle with the confederate fiends of guilt and woe. There is not elsewhere a combat so glorious, or a trophy so divine.

NOTES.

A.

Origin of the Doctrine of Two Principles.

The prominent place which the doctrine of two principles occupies in the later theology of the Persians has procured for that people the reputation of being the first to apprehend it; and for Zoroaster the credit of assigning to it its due importance in the religious reformation which he accomplished. So much doubt, however, exists, respecting the age in which Zoroaster lived, the nature and extent of the change which he introduced, and even on the question whether he really taught the dualistic scheme at all, that he cannot justly deprive the Ionian philosophers of a claim to originality in their resort to it. If either before the Persian conquest of the Medes,or in the time of Darius Hystaspes, this doctrine had been entrusted to the Magi, as conservators of the national religion, it is difficult to account for the omission of so fundamental a tenet in the account which Herodotus gives of the Persian theology. The simple monotheism which the Father of History describes, as seeking the mountain top in sacrifice, and calling the whole circle of the heavens God,* can scarcely be the same with the elaborate system of dualism, attributed by Plutarch to Zoroaster and the Magi;† and the difference between the two accounts throws a doubt on the antiquity of the latter doctrine in the East. Yet, on the other hand, if we assign to it the most recent date of which the case admits, we must allow that it formed part of the *popular belief* in the fourth century before Christ; in which case, it must have existed, at least in its previous *philosophical*

* Οἱ δ' νομίζουσι Διὶ μὲν, ἐπὶ τὰ ὑψηλότατα τῶν οὀρέων ἀναβαίνοντες, θυσίας ἔρδειν, τὸν κύκλον πάντα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ Δία καλέοντες. i. 131.

† De Iside et Osiride, § 46, 47.

form, in the fifth. A doctrine, however, which had not yet assumed a mythological character, or drawn to itself any external ceremonial, might easily escape the notice of Herodotus. The Indian books, which contain the same tenet, are thought by Friedrich von Schlegel to have borrowed it from Persia;* and cannot therefore be adduced in separate proof of its high antiquity. On the whole, there appears to be no evidence of its propagation among any native Oriental people, before the brilliant period of art and philosophy in the Greek cities of Asia Minor.

Even if it should be chronologically incorrect to affirm, that Ionian speculation "anticipated" the oriental religions in their theological and philosophical ideas, there is no sufficient reason to deny its independence and originality. Though the Greek schools did not arise till an opening intercourse with Egypt and the interior of Asia afforded to their founders the *opportunity* of borrowing from foreign sources, it does not appear that they estimated this advantage highly enough to avail themselves of it. Only a truly indigenous philosophy could have left such distinct traces of a regular and progressive development, beginning with the poetical cosmogonies of a purely mythological æra, and growing, under the fostering care of successive teachers, into vast speculative systems, bearing a relation, continually more obscure and questionable, to the theology which gave them birth. Adverting to this natural process, Mr. Thirlwall says: "It can excite no surprise that in a period such as we are now reviewing, when thought and inquiry were stimulated in so many new directions, some active minds should have been attracted by the secrets of nature, and should have been led to grapple with some of the great questions which the contemplation of the visible universe suggests. There can therefore be no need of attempting to trace the impulse by which the Greeks were now carried toward such researches, to a foreign origin. But it is an opinion which has found many advocates, that they were indebted to their widening intercourse with other nations, particularly with Egypt, Phœnicia, and the interior of Asia, for several of the views and doctrines which were fundamental or prominent parts of their earlier philosophical systems. The result, however, of the maturest investigation, seems to show that there is no sufficient ground

* See his Treatise, Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier: an abstract of which, with a translation of the portions relating to the dualistic system, will be found in Dr. Prichard's Analysis of the Egyptian Mythology, Book III.

even for this conjecture.* On the other hand, it is clear that the first philosophers were not wholly independent of the earlier intellectual efforts of their own countrymen, and that, perhaps unconsciously, they derived the form, if not, in part at least, the substance of their speculations, from the old theogonies and cosmogonies."†

The successive evolutions of the Pantheistic principle, and its final renunciation by Anaxagoras, are thus succinctly described by Mr. Thirlwall: "Thales evolved his world out of a single simple substance, *(water)* to which he attributed the power of passing spontaneously through the various transformations necessary for the multiplicity of natural productions. But he does not seem to have attempted accurately to define the nature of these transformations. And so most of his successors, who set out from a similar hypothesis, contented themselves with some vague notions, or phrases, about the successive expansions or contractions of the original substance. But as the contemplation of animal life had led Anaximenes to adopt *air* as the basis of his system, a later philosopher, Diogenes of Apollonia, carried this analogy a step further, and regarded the universe as issuing from an intelligent principle, by which it was at once vivified and ordered—a rational, as well as sensitive soul—still without recognizing any distinction between matter and mind. Much earlier, however, Anaximander of Miletus, who flourished not long after Thales, and is generally considered as his immediate disciple, seems to have been struck by the difficulty of accounting for the changes which a simple substance must be supposed to undergo, in order to produce an infinite variety of beings. He found it easier, in conformity with some of the ancient cosmogonies, to conceive the primitive state of the universe as a vast chaos, for which he had no other name than the infinite,—containing all the elements out of which the world was to be constructed, by a process of separation and combination, which, however, he considered as the result of a motion, not impressed on it from without, but inherent in the mass. This hypothesis, which tended to give an entirely new direction to the speculations of the school, seems to have been treated with a neglect which it is difficult to explain, and which has raised a suspicion that some less celebrated names may have dropped out of the list of the Ionian philosophers.

* We allude to Ritter (Geschichte der Philosophie), who (i. p. 159-173) has weighed all the arguments which have been alleged in behalf of this opinion with an even hand.

† Thirlwall's History of Greece, Vol. II. pp. 130, 131.

But a century after Anaximander, Anaxagoras of Clazomenæ revived his doctrine with some very fanciful additions, and one very important change. He combined the principle of Anaximander with that of his contemporary Diogenes, and acknowledged a supreme mind, distinct from the chaos to which it imparted motion, form, and order. The Pantheistic systems of the Ionian school were only independent of the popular creed, and did not exclude it. The language of Thales and Heraclitus, who declared that the universe was full of gods, left room for all the fictions of the received mythology, and might even add new fervour to the superstition of the vulgar. But the system of Anaxagoras seems to have been felt to be almost irreconcilable with the prevailing opinions, and hence, as we shall find, drew upon him hatred and persecution."*

In confirmation of the opinions expressed towards the close of this Lecture, I cannot refrain from subjoining the following moral estimate of the doctrine of two principles: it is from F. von Schlegel's Treatise, before alluded to, on the Language and Wisdom of the Indians. "Pantheism inevitably destroys the distinction between good and evil, however strenuously its advocates may contend in words against this reproach; the doctrine of emanation depresses the moral freedom of the will by the idea of an infinite degree of innate guilt, and the belief that every being is predestined to crime and misery; the system of two principles, and the warfare between good and evil, holds the middle place between these extremes: it becomes, itself, a powerful incentive to a similar contest, and a source of the purest morality."†

* Vol. II. pp. 134, 135.

† Dr. Prichard's Translation. Egyp. Myth. pp. 242, 243.

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B.

Hebrew Names for the Evil Spirit.

The mere fact, that no proper names for the Evil Spirit exist in the Hebrew language, except such as are of Apocryphal or Rabbinical creation, is in itself a sufficient proof of the late and unscriptural origin of the belief in his existence. A glance at an English concordance will make it evident, that the word "Devil," in the singular number, does not occur in our authorized translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. It is found in the plural in Lev. xvii. 7, 2 Chron. xi. 15, Deut. xxxii. 17, Ps. cvi. 37; and in none of these instances can it for a moment be supposed that the original word, if used in the singular, would represent any idea corresponding to the popular notion of the Devil; indeed, when the Rabbinical writers needed a name for the expression of this idea, they had recourse to other terms than those which are found in the verses just cited. In the two latter passages, the Hebrew word is שדים, literally, *mighty beings*; it clearly denotes *false gods*, and probably designates them by the title applied to them by their votaries; for the name is evidently not contemptuous, and is indeed radically the same which was applied by the Israelites to Jehovah, and receives in our version the translation *Almighty*. In the two former passages, the word is שעירים, literally, *goats*, and evidently denotes the heathen deities, typified under the form of that animal; especially, we may suppose, the Egyptian Pan, worshipped in the Mendesian nome,* with rites the most abominable. In Isaiah xiii. 21, the common translation renders the same word *satyrs*.

Several names of evil spirits occur in the Talmudical writings: and among them are two which are appropriated to the Satanic chief, viz., סמאל, *Samael*; and אשמדי, *Asmodæus*. The latter is the term by which the evil spirit is designated in Tobit iii. 8: and it would be easy to show, by a multitude of passages, that the being to whom both these names were given corresponded to the "Devil" of modern theology, as far as correspondence can be affirmed to exist between any two creations of the imagination. Thus we are told, in words which also show the use of the word *Satan* as a generic rather

* Bochart's Hierozoicon. P. I. lib. ii. p. 640. seqq. Herod. II. 46.

than a proper name; "The wicked angel Samael is prince of *all* *Satans*," סמאל הרשע ראש כל השטנים הוא.* Again, Jehov is represented as saying to him, under his title of Angel of De (מלאך המות) "I have made thee Ruler of the world," נשיתי אותך קוזמוקרטור (*κοσμοκράτορα*).† The same supremacy is attribu to this being under his other name. Thus it is said, that wh Solomon became too much elated by his prosperity, there was s to him "Asmodæus, the Prince of evil spirits," אשמדאי מלכא דשדים.‡ And with slight variation of phrase he is described as "t devil Asmodæus, the Prince of Spirits," ראשמדאי רבהון דרוחתא.§ Buxtorf identifies Samael and Asmodæus, on the author of R. Elias; he says, "Eundem esse *Asmodæum*, qui alio nomi Rabbinis dicitur *Samael*."‖ And Bertholdt again identifies this bei with the enemy of the Gospel described in 2 Cor. iv. 4, as *ὁ θεὸς αἰῶνος τούτου*; and in John xiv. 30, as *ὁ τοῦ κόσμου [τούτου] ἔρχεται*: af quoting these phrases, he says "Apud Targumistas et Rabbinos c currit sub nomine סמאל *Samael*."¶

The idea then of which we are in search, is unquestionably of fi quent occurrence among the Talmudists. In expressing it they ha recourse to new names not found in the Canonical writings. Sure a strong presumption arises, that the Hebrew Scriptures did not fu nish them with the means of designating the personage about who they discoursed.

* Elleh Haddebarim rabba, fol. 302. 2. ap. D. L. Bertholdt's Christolo Judæorum Jesu Apostolorumque ætate. § 36.

† Vajikra rabba, fol. 151. col. 1. ap. Bertholdt. *loc. cit.*

‡ Targum in Eccles. i. 12. ap. Joh. Buxtorf. Lex. Chald. Talm. & Rabb. in אשמדאי.

§ Aruch ex Rabboth. ap. Lightfoot's Hebr. and Talmud. Exercitations Matt. xii. 24. See also on Luke xi. 15.

‖ Lex. Chald. *loc. cit.*

¶ Christologia, *loc. cit.*

C.

The parallel Passages in the Epistles of Jude and 2 Peter.

For the sake of those readers of the English Scriptures who may not have noticed the remarkable similarity between the Epistle of Jude, and the second chapter of the second Epistle of Peter, I subjoin a comparison of the two. A reference to the Greek Testament will make it evident, that the parallelism is fairly exhibited in our common translation. My present purpose, at least, will be sufficiently answered by taking the citations thence.

2 Peter ii.	Jude.
1. . . There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.	4. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.
3. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.	
4. For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment:	6. And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.
6. And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly:	7. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

2 Peter ii.	Jude.
10. But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.	8. Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.
11. Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.	9. Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the Devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.
12. But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption.	10. But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.
13. . . Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you.	12. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear.
17. These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.	12. Clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; . .
	13. . . . Wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.
18. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.	16. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

Very few readers, it is probable, will rise from the examination of this parallelism, without the persuasion, that the writings betraying it cannot be independent productions; and without amazement at the opinion of Lardner, that "the similitude of the subject might produce," to such extent, "a resemblance of style. The design," he

continues, " of St. Peter and St. Jude was to condemn some loose and erroneous Christians, and to caution others against them. When speaking of the same sort of persons, their style and figures of speech would have a great agreement." * Lardner appears to shrink from attributing to the inspired St. Jude (supposing him to be the later writer) either plagiarism or a needless repetition of instruction.† But why should his inspiration deter him from such an act? It rather affords, as Michaelis observes, a conclusive reason for ascribing it to him. " For the Holy Ghost," this author suggests, " certainly knew, while he was dictating the Epistle to St. Jude, that an Epistle of St. Peter, of a like import, already existed. And if the Holy Ghost, notwithstanding this knowledge, still thought that an Epistle of St. Jude was not unnecessary, why shall we suppose that St. Jude himself would have been prevented from writing by the same knowledge?"‡ This argument of the learned German certainly renders it unnecessary to *doubt*, with the scrupulous Lardner, whether St. Jude would copy from a fellow-labourer's letter: but then, it also renders it unnecessary to *believe* this: for with the perfect familiarity which the *Holy Ghost* possessed (" while dictating") with the previous epistle of Peter, there was no occasion whatever for *St. Jude* to have the knowledge too. Indeed so completely might any degree of parallelism be explained in this way, that no conceivable phenomena of agreement would furnish the slightest proof that the one writer had seen the production of the other.

For some inscrutable reasons, however, all the ablest theologians seem to have declined this easy solution, by appeal to the memory of the Holy Ghost; and to have been convinced that some method, simply human, must be sought, to account for the accordance between these two epistles. Some have supposed, with Bishop Sherlock, that both authors drew their materials from a common source, the imagery and phraseology of which they freely used. But as Eichhorn has well observed, " Bare conjecture is an insufficient support for this supposition; in the absence of all trace of any document

* Credibility of the Gospel History. Supplement, ch. xxi.

† " It seems very unlikely that St. Jude should write so similar an epistle, if he had seen St. Peter's. In that case, St. Jude would not have thought it needful for him to write at all. If he had formed a design of writing, and had met with an epistle of one of the apostles, very suitable to his own thoughts and intentions, I think he would have forborne to write."—Cred. *loc. cit.*

‡ Michaelis' Introd. to the N. T. ch. xxix. sec. 2.

giving plausibility to the suggestion, by disclosing a source in common relation with the corresponding passages of the two epistles." * If this explanation be untenable, nothing remains but to conclude that one of the writers copied from the other; and this, accordingly, has been the general opinion of theologians. This, however, is the only point on which critics are agreed: for when the question is proposed, whether St. Peter or St. Jude were the original writer, it is curious to observe the confidence with which each of the two answers may be returned, and the opposite views which may be taken of the considerations affecting the decision. In the absence of all external evidence, the intrinsic character of the two compositions must determine our reply: and the chief impression which results from a comparison of them is, that St. Jude has expressed his ideas with more succinctness and unity; St. Peter with more vagueness and amplification. Appealing to this circumstance, Dr. Hug says, "the critic cannot fail to perceive which was the original:" "it is evident that the passages of Peter are periphrases and amplifications;" "the *originality of Jude is clear* from the comparison of both authors, and especially from the language;" "Peter had, therefore, the Epistle of Jude before him, and in his own manner applied it to his purposes."† Michaelis, however,—who rejects the Epistle of Jude, and says that, "judging by its contents," we "have no inducement to believe it a sacred and divine work,"—ventures on the following confident statements: "No doubt can be made, that the second Epistle of St. Peter was, in respect to the Epistle of St. Jude, the original and not the copy:" "with respect to the date of this (Jude's) Epistle, *all that I am able to assert* is, that it was written *after* the second Epistle of St. Peter;" "this appears from a comparison of the two, which are so similar to each other both in sentiments and in expressions, as no two epistles could well be, unless the author of the one had read the epistle of the other. It is evident therefore that St. Jude borrowed from St. Peter both expressions and arguments, to which he himself has made some few additions."‡

After reading these positive statements on either side, we are struck with the justice of the following remark of Eichhorn's: referring to the differences between the two epistles in respect to their

* Eichhorn's Einleitung in das neue Testament, viii. 3.

† Dr. J. L. Hug's Introduction to the New Testament: translated by Dr. Wait. Sec. 169, 170.

‡ Marsh's Michaelis, ch. xxviii. sec. 1; ch. xxix. sec. 2, 5.

style, he says: "These phenomena admit of a twofold explanation. Peter might be regarded as the original and Jude as the copy; inasmuch as, in the process of revision, a writing may become more perfect in the expression and disposition of the ideas: the superfluities will naturally be retrenched, the march of the thoughts become quicker, the diction more choice; the copyist having the matter all before him, and being able to direct his attention exclusively to the form which it shall assume. But with just as much truth we might turn round and say,—Jude was the original, whom Peter illustrated, amplified, and paraphrased. In the process, the style lost its unity, its compactness, its clear outline: the paraphrast interrupted the succession of thoughts with several foreign ideas; and the exposition of the subject thus became more obscure, prolix, and disorderly. Who can decide between these two possibilities?"

This acute author does not, however, consider the problem of impossible solution. The suspense in which its difficulty holds us, continues, he observes, "only so long as we confine ourselves merely to a mutual comparison of the parallel passages. If we look at them in their relation to the whole of St. Peter's second epistle, we find a reason for concluding that Jude is original, Peter the copyist. The author of the *second chapter* of Peter does not stand, as a writer, on his own ground: if he did, his mode of writing would be the same as in the *first and third chapters*, which, however, is not the case. It is clear that we cannot apply to Jude this test of originality, derived from consistency of style; for we possess no other composition of his, with which to compare his epistle. Yet there is a compactness and unity in his writing, from which its independent character may be inferred. Whoever is content to take up the thoughts of others, yet not without introducing something of his own, is easily drawn aside by accessory ideas; by which the definite outline of a composition is lost. This is by no means the case in the epistle of Jude."*

It is generally admitted, then, that these two productions, as far as their topics coincide, constitute but one authority: and we shall follow, I think, the most judicious criticism, if we assign that authority, whatever it may be, to the epistle of Jude. Whence, then, did he derive his knowledge of such circumstances as those which are mentioned in the sixth and ninth verses, respecting "the angels

* Einleitung in d. N. T. viii. 3.

which kept not their first estate," and "Michael the archangel contending with the Devil" "about the body of Moses?" There are but three supposable sources; immediate personal inspiration; the Hebrew Scriptures; or some non-canonical and unauthoritative work.

The first of these suppositions I do not find to be maintained by any creditable theological writer; and it may be dismissed with the following remarks of Michaelis:—"The dispute between Michael and the Devil about the body of Moses, has by no means the appearance of a true history: and the author of our epistle has not even hinted that he knew it to be true by the aid of Divine inspiration, or that he distinguished it from other Jewish traditions. On the contrary, he has introduced it as part of a story, with which his readers were already acquainted: he does not appear to have had any other authority for it, than they themselves had: nor does the part which he has quoted at all imply, either that he himself doubted, or that he wished his readers should doubt, of the other parts of it."*

The second supposition, that the writer makes no allusion, on these points of celestial history, to any thing beyond the Old Testament, is so universally regarded as untenable, that even Lardner's great authority will hardly avail to procure it any further attention. In what part of the Hebrew Scriptures St. Jude obtained his information respecting the fallen angels, Lardner, while deploring a like omission on the part of his predecessors, has neglected to explain. And when, in order to connect the story of Michael and the Devil with Zach. iii. 1—3, he is obliged to construe "*the body of Moses*," into *the Israelitish people*, it surely becomes evident that the consideration of this passage never fully engaged his incomparable judgment.† Happily, Lardner's is a reputation of which there is no need to be economical: and even theological opponents cannot apply to him the description which, with some truth and more severity, they have given of Mr. Wakefield, as a "scholar, who was great among Unitarians, but not among scholars:"—

> "Quem bis terque bonum cum risu miror; et idem
> Indignor, quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus?"

There remains, then, but the third supposition, that St. Jude de-

* Marsh's Michaelis, ch. xxix. sec. 4.

† For a sufficient refutation of Lardner's interpretation, see the last-cited section of Marsh's Michaelis.

rived these notices of the supernatural world from some apocryphal and traditional work. And we need the less scruple to admit this, as he himself intimates the fact, in the fourteenth verse, where he refers to the *Book of Enoch*. This work professes to be extant in the Æthiopic language; and the copies of it contain the passage cited by St. Jude: and whatever doubts may attach to Bishop Lawrance's opinion, that we have it substantially as it was originally written shortly before the time of Christ, the citations from the "Book of Enoch," by Syncellus, and the references to it by both Greek and Latin Fathers, are too numerous and ancient, to leave it questionable that such a work existed, and was in use not long after the Christian era, and probably before. Hug gives this account of it:— "The Book of Enoch, in fact, was full of Jewish, Theurgical, and Magical reveries, as indeed the character of the person, to whom this writing was ascribed, required it to be. According to Eupolemus, he is said to have been the inventor of Astrology, or rather a scholar of the Angels in this science, who initiated him into the mysteries of it; for he had at one time obtained a mission to the Angels, on which occasion he probably received their instruction. But it did not suffice, that he was acquainted with the course of the planets, the position of the Heavens, and their signification; but he likewise, as the Jews and other Easterns maintained, learned in addition from the heavenly natures, the art of prognostication, characters, offerings, purifications, lustrations, and other things of this description, which he imparted to mankind. According to these ideas, which were entertained of him far and wide among Jews, Arabians, and others, we can easily determine, to what sort of literature his writings must belong. The remains of it, which we find in the Church-Fathers also, do not deceive this expectation." *

Though this is the only Apocryphal production to which St. Jude refers by name, Origen informs us, in a passage already cited, that the adventure between Michael and the Devil was taken from a work entitled Ἀνάληψις or Ἀνάβασις τοῦ Μωσέως. "From a comparison of the relation in this book with St. Jude's quotation," says Michaelis, "he was thoroughly persuaded, that it was the book from which St. Jude quoted. This he asserts without the least hesitation: and in consequence of this persuasion, he himself has quoted the Assumption of Moses, as a work of authority, in proof of the tempta-

* Hug's Introduction, sec. 175.

tion of Adam and Eve by the Devil. But as he has quote merely for this purpose, he has given us only an imperfect acc of what this book contained, relative to the dispute about the bo Moses. One circumstance, however, he has mentioned, whic not found in the epistle of St. Jude, namely, that Michael repro the Devil with having possessed the serpent which seduced In what manner this circumstance is connected with the dis about the body of Moses will appear from the following consid tion. The Jews imagined the person of Moses was so holy, God could find no reason for permitting him to die: and that thing but the sin committed by Adam and Eve in paradise, w brought death into the world, was the cause why Moses did not for ever. The same notions they entertained of some other holy persons, for instance of Isai, who, they say, was delivere the angel of death, merely on account of the sins of our first pare though he himself did not deserve to die. Now in the dispute tween Michael and the Devil about Moses, the Devil was the accu and demanded the death of Moses. Michael therefore replied him, that he himself was the cause of that sin, which alone co occasion the death of Moses. How very little such notions as th agree, either with the Christian theology, or with Moses' o writings, it is unnecesary for me to declare." *

The direct testimony of Origen should be taken in connex with the well-known fact, that this story of Michael and the De is one of the standing traditions of the Jewish people; the inventi of a remote antiquity; and repeated ever since by a multitude Rabbinical writers. A specimen of the legend may be found by t curious in the section of Michaelis, from which I have quoted t foregoing passage. With respect to the reception which we m give to such an alleged fact, the same author observes—" It l without the circle of human experience; and therefore it cannot attested by any man, unless he has either divine inspiration, or l intercourse with beings of a superior order. Consequently, whoe was the author of the apocryphal book, from which the quotati was made, his account cannot possibly command assent."† T remark evidently applies, not only to the story of Michael, but to t tradition of the Fallen Angels; which, there is every reason to l

* Marsh's Michaelis, ch. xxix. sec. 4.

† Marsh's Mich. *loc. cit.*

lieve, must have been derived from a like apocryphal source; especially as we have the express assurance of Tertullian, that the Book of Enoch treated of the nature, offices, and fate of fallen Beings.*

This author, then, has unquestionably "made use of Jewish materials, which have no existence but in apocryphal books,"† and therefore no claim on our belief. "I know of no other method of vindicating the quotation," says Michaelis, "than by supposing that St. Jude considered the whole story, not as a real fact, which either he himself believed, or which he required his readers to believe, but merely as an instructive fable, which served to illustrate the doctrine which he himself inculcated, that we ought not to speak evil of dignities."‡ Hug resorts to an explanation of this kind; and conceives that St. Jude employs apocryphal weapons of persuasion, as best adapted to confound the Heretics whom he assailed.§ It may be so: but if his illustrations and examples from the supernatural world be thus destitute of intrinsic authority and truth, and *we must be heretics before we can feel their force*, what becomes of the *orthodox doctrine* of fallen Angels?

* De habitu mulier, c. 3. De Idolat. c. 4. et 15. De cultu fœminar. c. 10, as cited by Hug, sec. 175.

† Eichhorn's Einl. viii. 4. § 296.

‡ *loc. cit.* Michaelis adds a hint, which may perhaps be as appropriate in England as in Germany: "To the doctrine, which St. Jude inculcates by this quotation, that we ought not to speak evil of dignities, not even of the fallen angels, but that we should leave judgment to God, I have no objection. And I really think, that they transgress the bounds of propriety, who make it their business, either in the pulpit or in their writings, to represent the devil as an object of detestation; since, notwithstanding his fall, he is still a being of a superior order. This reminds me of a certain oriental sect, which Niebuhr met with in the neighbourhood of the river Zab, in Assyria, and which, for the same reason as that which I have just assigned, will not suffer any one to speak evil of the devil."

§ *loc. cit.*

THE CHRISTIAN VIEW

OF

RETRIBUTION HEREAFTER.

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN

PARADISE STREET CHAPEL,

LIVERPOOL,

ON TUESDAY, MAY 7, 1839.

BY

REV. HENRY GILES.

BEING THE TWELFTH OF A SERIES, TO BE DELIVERED WEEKLY, IN ANSWER TO A COURSE OF LECTURES AGAINST UNITARIANISM, IN CHRIST CHURCH, LIVERPOOL, BY THIRTEEN CLERGYMEN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

LIVERPOOL:
WILLMER AND SMITH, 32, CHURCH STREET.
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JOHN GREEN, 121, NEWGATE STREET

1839.

WILLMER AND SMITH,
32, CHURCH STREET, LIVERPOOL.

LECTURE XII.

THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF RETRIBUTION HEREAFTER.

BY REV. HENRY GILES.

"AND GOD SAID TO JONAH, DOEST THOU WELL TO BE ANGRY FOR THE GOURD? AND HE SAID, I DO WELL TO BE ANGRY, EVEN UNTO DEATH. THEN SAID THE LORD, THOU HAST PITY ON THE GOURD FOR WHICH THOU HAST NOT LABOURED, NEITHER MADEST IT GROW; WHICH CAME UP IN A NIGHT AND PERISHED IN A NIGHT. AND SHOULD NOT I SPARE NINEVEH, THAT GREAT CITY, WHEREIN ARE MORE THAN SIX SCORE THOUSAND PERSONS THAT CANNOT DISCERN BETWEEN THEIR RIGHT HAND AND THEIR LEFT?"—*Jonah* iv. 9, 10, 11.

PAIN affects us, as it comes near to us. The war or famine, or any other calamity that afflicts a nation afar off, is but a vague report or a distant rumour; it may not pass unheard, but comparatively it is unfelt. It requires that grief shall touch and sting us in our selfishness; that we may know fully and truly what it inflicts on others. And it is thus that God at once rebukes and cures our insensibility, by bringing loss and sorrow home to our own souls: the withered gourd wrung tears from the surly and unamiable prophet: but the prospect of Nineveh with her mighty population in ashes had nothing with which to touch the fountains of his sorrows.

Admitting as I thus do that there is much of selfishness in our nature, yet persuaded that there is also much of sympathy and mercy in it, taking either the character of God, or that of man as a criterion, I have long regarded the belief of e nal punishment as one of those moral paradoxes whic cannot deny, and for which you cannot account.

human creatures, so far as they accord with their human
shrink from inflicting or beholding pain; and when t
can inflict it wantonly, or behold it without compassion,
can pronounce on them no sentence of deeper reproba
than to call them *inhuman*. We tread not knowingly on
crawling worm; we hear not insensibly the inarticulate v
of the sick and dumb animal: and yet many of us
would not look unmoved on the last spasms of an expi
dog, can believe that God regards with ruthless sternness
eternal tortures of numberless eternal spirits. We cannot g
without compassion on the tear in the infant's speechless
and yet some of us can believe that God has created s
beings to look up through all eternity from hopeless tort
We cannot think on the racks by which tyrant-man has
tured his brother-man—on the dungeons in which he has
prisoned him, and shut out from him the sun of heaven
the breath of nature, without a feeling of repugnance an
sentiment of indignation, and yet Christians can believe t
God, whom they call "the good, the merciful," has c
structed for his creatures means of undying anguish and d
geons of boundless darkness, where the smile of hope ne
gleams, where the light of mercy never comes. We lam
war, and yet, if orthodox, we believe that God maintains
his dominions regions of everlasting warfare; we lament t
madness and abuse of passion, and yet, if orthodox, we m
believe that God allows that madness and abuse to be et
nalized in all their extreme malignity. We lament physi
and mental suffering; except on the visitation of mercy no
of us would desire to go through the lazar house, wh
despair and anguish lie low together, where the head is hea
and the pulse is fevered; or through those asylums which gi
refuge to humanity in its last calamity, and its worst; a
yet, if orthodox, we can believe that God perpetuates throug
out everlasting ages the worst evils of the body, the fierc
passions, and the most awful madness of the soul. And

this great, this glorious universe is his—is his workmanship—it came not up in a night, it is not to perish in a night—the earth is long to be green, and the heavens are to be bright. Throughout the space that has no limit, throughout the time that has no end, the stars are to shine, and systems are to move onward in their unmeasured and their trackless glory. And yet, if orthodox, we must believe there is an endless hell whose smoke of torment must ascend for ever against their brightness. These, the works of God's hands, are marred—the majesty of his power defeated—Paradise is made a wilderness, and hell is made populous. If we think of the world with any degree of realising truth, we shall feel this result to be most tremendous, and we shall wonder that God with infinite power should have created such a lovely universe to be defaced; that he should have peopled it with such capacities for good, to be exercised for ever only in the production of evil; that he should have given them immense and eternal capacities only to be immense and eternal capacities for misery. This, if true, is the greatest miracle and the greatest mystery unquestionably in the divine government.

This subject committed to my charge I feel to be truly solemn and awful. Next to the idea of a God, that of a future state is the most important. The character we ascribe to God operates on our own, or is created by it; and so our conceptions of the future life reacts on human conduct, and human sentiments. We may see this painfully in the mistakes and abuses with which harsh views of the future life have clouded the Christian church, and poisoned the heart of Christendom. These gloomy sentiments from many robbed religion of solace, and the breast of peace. I have seen beings maddened and convulsed by visions of Calvinism. I have heard them long for annihilation as a consummation most desirable—not in the remorse of sin, but in tortures of superstition.—I have seen them look forwar

pleasure to the church-yard turf under which they were rest for ever from their troubles, and sleep in peace th "eternal sleep." This sombre belief has at once desola and darkened earth. Faith it has turned to a boundless fe the dread of the future it makes the bitterness of the prese and is equally the parent of stern self-infliction, or of remor less intolerance. It was this that in older days drove ascetic to the desert; that made nature and the face of fellow hateful to him; that filled his ferocious solitude w unearthly terrors; that trained, instead of a saint, a theo gical savage: it was this which aroused religious wars; whi infused into these wars a spirit of fury; that demonised h manity; that made a most merciful nature a stranger mercy: it was this which brought man in nearest reser blance to that vile and wicked being whom his worst a blackest passions had formed: it was this belief that to out the heart of flesh and put in its place the heart of stone- a heart which no appeal could soften, and which no appe could move. It was not until there was a hell without hop that there was a heart without mercy. I believe it to b quite capable of proof, that no mere worldly wickedness ha ever cursed mankind with so many sufferings as the belief c this doctrine; that has ever heaped on them so many cruelties and made them agents of cruelties in return. Why have war for religion ever been the worst? The reason is obvious the soldiers of religion are not soldiers of flesh; the sol diers of religion enter into no earthly service; they enlis under the god of battles and of vengeance. It is against th hated, and the vile, and the accursed, and the lost, they carry destruction; they are but the executioners of the righteou decrees of God, and theirs are the championship of piety and the chivalry of heaven. When the weak contend with th weak, mutual need begets mutual mercy: but when th natural ferocity of passion assumes the authority of God, and clothes itself with the armour of the skies, the gulf in which

all charity is buried, is broad and unfathomable as that which is commonly placed between heaven and hell. This belief was one of the main causes of the most horrible religious persecutions. It was not until the generous and gentle sensibility of the religious nature was debased by coarse picturings of physical tortures and of endless miseries, that the sacerdotal arm became terrible as death, and the sacerdotal spirit was drenched in wrath as dire and unrelenting as that which they fashioned beyond the grave. Before priestly and popular imaginations God became an awful punisher. They created in heaven a throne of inexorable judgment, and from that throne the word of fate went forth which could but once be spoken, and cut off hope for ever. They freed themselves from human compunctions, and emulated the stern despotism which they preached or believed. Fear is the parent of cruelty—and in religion, as in character, the slavish spirit is ever the most unfeeling. The truth is, that whether in idea or in act, familiarity with torture stupifies the heart and indurates the senses. That frequent contemplation of pain destroys sympathy, and that pain, when once it can be carelessly seen, can be easily inflicted, are facts which observation has placed beyond the need of argument, and experience beyond the reach of contradiction.

In this Lecture I propose two objects:—First, to state my views on moral retribution, which in essentials I apprehend are those of Unitarians in general: Secondly, to examine the arguments which are advanced in favour of eternal torture, and to state my reasons for not believing them. I shall try to the utmost of my power to condense what I have to say, but I hope for your indulgence in return, if on a subject of such compass—on which so many volumes have been written —there should be some omissions. The end of this or any other lecture can never be to expound an important topic in all its completeness, so much as to suggest and excite inquiry concerning it.

I. I shall, in the first place, enter on the positive sectic of my lecture; and on this point, I am sorry to say that tl frequent re-assertion of mistakes regarding our doctrines wi put me to the painful necessity of much repetition.

1.—I commence with a few remarks on the nature of si One essential characteristic on which we have insisted—ar we believe what we have asserted—is, that sin is a dee spiritual injury. The source of it is in the soul; it is tl dark corruption of an evil heart. This I take to be one (the greatest and profoundest revelations of Christ, one whic places him infinitely above all other moral teachers, and whic makes Christianity the highest scheme of moral duty. Fals religions and false philosophies have been all at variance wit this inward sense of duty. They have contrived numberles inventions as substitutes for it, or devised most ingeniou means to nullify it. Priesthoods, with most imposing autho rity and mystical influence, have offered all sorts of spiritua panaceas to ease the wounded conscience. Ceremonies, witl all graceful gesture and solemn import, have presented thei beauty to the senses, and their spell to the fancies of super· stition. Sacrifices without number—from the turtle-dove tc the hecatomb; from the scape-goat driven to the desert, tc the human being slaughtered to God; from the blood of life swelling round a thousand altars of vengeance, to the flowers and the fruits that were heaped upon the altars of mercy—all these have been tried to make religion for the senses, to make religion a flattery and delusion: but all were not sufficient; conscience is stronger than rituals, and to that conscience, tc that spirit of God in the soul of man, Christ came; to that he was the Apostle and to that he preached. Christ went at once into the soul; he pierced the veil of sophistries and deceits by which men are ingenious to discover excuses tc cover their selfishness and their wrong doings; he went tc the seat of the evil, and struck at once to the root of bitter· ness. Others baptized with water, cleansing merely the out·

side, but he baptized with fire and the holy spirit, going to the innermost thoughts of the heart and the veins;—others preached on the keeping of feast-days and fast-days, but he taught of that God who is not the Lord of times or seasons, but the God of life in every hour—the God of the whole universe in every motion;—others called men to go to the temple, Christ called them to go into their closets and commune with their hearts;—others told them to wash their hands, Christ exhorted them rather to cleanse their spirits;—others told them to fear men who could kill the body, Christ warned them not to fear man who could only kill the body, but to fear God who could kill the soul as well as the body. He was truly the prophet of eternity—the preacher for eternity. He was truly the preacher of the invisible, and the herald of it—he needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man—he required no testimony, for he had the knowledge of humanity in his own nature deep and true, but guiltless—and he spake out of the fullness of his own full heart: it was therefore that he spake as never man spake: it was therefore that the common people heard him gladly—for his words had power to those thoughts and affections which are native to bosoms of all men; it was therefore that he spake with authority, and not as the scribes: for they discoursed on the traditions of the fathers, but he appealed to the inspirations of God—they spake of what had been written on tables of stones, but he spoke of what had been written on the fleshy tables of the heart. Others made sin to consist in resistance to the priest or to the king—but Christ showed it to be an alienation of the soul from God, the apostacy of the conscience from its own sense of duty. It is that which is within, he taught, that defiles the man; a man may wash his hands seven times a-day, but not once cleanse his heart; he may often wash his hands, and yet never in innocency. He showed that sepulchres might be beautiful outside, and inside be only rottenness and corruption.

apostles learned of him this most profound, most divine ph losophy, and so they preached it to the world. To be ca nally minded, says Paul, is death; to be spiritually minded life and peace. Whatsoever, says the same apostle, a m soweth, that shall he also reap; he that soweth to the fles shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to t spirit, shall of the spirit reap everlasting life. Lust, (or e desire,) saith Saint James, when it hath conceived, bringe forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth deat This is the gospel doctrine on the inwardness and spirituali of sin; and we preach no other gospel, and we teach no oth doctrine. A solemn consequence attaches to our view whi is also powerfully enforced in the New Testament scripture but which the vicarious scheme tends directly to subvert- I mean the personal nature of transgression. Sin we hold be no transferable quality, and this was most lucidly prove here by one of my brother lecturers. With the sinner him self lies the guilt; with him who contracts it it must li it cannot be acquired by imputation, nor can it be punishe by imputation. If one doctrine be more clearly taught i scripture than another, it is this, that the offender shall b answerable only for his own sins; and for these, as surely a there are a conscience, a future world, and a God, he mu be answerable.—Every man, our Saviour declares, shall b judged according to his own works. Every one of us, th Apostle Paul asserts, shall give an account of himself to Go But no, saith orthodoxy, you must also be answerable fo Adam, and upon your head must be a guilt that darkene the very dawn of creation; and so upon this principle gui should descend from sire to son; the later we are in ex istence, the more tremendous should be this growing mou tain of imputation, until the last man should sink under th burden of all the crime which had been from the first man t himself.—We are told that Unitarians make light of sin. Bu I ask, what does orthodoxy make of justice? And I furth

ask, what does it make of scripture? If there were a judge on earth who decided as orthodoxy decides, he would be scouted as a monster: if there were a code of laws which contained such a standard, the common moral sense of mankind would reject it; nay, there is not a tribe of savages in the habitable world so blind to the idea of justice as not to repel the dogma of imputed and eternal punishment. And yet we are gravely told that God thus acts, and that the Bible thus teaches; we are constantly rebuked as wanting in faith and humility, because we can find no such principles in either providence or the Bible. The plain declaration of the prophet Ezekiel contains the spirit of both. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." As certainly as we have a moral sense, as surely as we can discern between right and wrong, we are compelled to acknowledge the one and utterly to repudiate the other. Give but the conscience justice, let common sense have but the slightest voice in the decision, and you might as easily attempt to gain a man's assent to the broadest of contradictions, even to the admission that a part is equal to the whole, or that two and two are five, as to feel guilty for another man's crime, to feel remorse for another man's wrong-doing, to be penitent or humble for that in which we had no participation, or to confess the justice of punishment by a sentence which made him criminal before his existence. On the moral injuries of thus forcing men to contradict the first dictates of their nature, of destroying the personality of virtue on the one side by an imputed righteousness, and the personality of sin on the other by an imputed guilt, I intend not here to enlarge: but one evil I will just allude to; I mean the wrong it does to truth of sentiment. Feelings in their real existence which are most excellent and most beautiful, it distorts and falsifies. There are no

virtues on earth that bring men nearer to heaven than humility and repentance. To be humble with a true humility is to be in the likeness of Christ; to be penitent with a true repentance is to be an object of rejoicing even to the angels of heaven: but when we hear it said that we are to be of lowly mind on account of inherited corruption, and penitent for imputed sin; when we try to force ourselves into emotions which are not native to the soul, unconsciously we undermine its simplicity and sincerity, and instead of virtues which must be of spontaneous growth, or not exist at all, we have sickly abortions of sentiment that are false, because unnatural; strained efforts that are at eternal war with experience; and high-sounding phrases that are as empty as echo and as cold as the frozen blast. Perversions like these are almost worse than vices, for vices, though they mar the life, may leave the moral judgment its integrity. Where there is true conviction there may be amendment, but when the inward sense is itself diseased, the case is all but hopeless. Whatever be the evil of sin, whatever be its punishment; whether the evil be infinite or limited, whether the punishment be eternal or temporal, let us at least beware of weakening that sentiment on which all morality is founded, the deep sense of personal responsibility. Unitarian views are often described as being unfavourable to spirituality; but if by spirituality I am to understand the inward life of man, the activity of his mental and moral energies, then I think these views eminently spiritual. The spirit of man is their great subject, and the spirit of God in the human, their great agency of salvation. Within the soul itself they place moral salvation or moral destruction, and within the soul itself they place the elements which constitute one or the other, the sense of guilt which makes its hell, the conscious holiness which makes its heaven. This inward power of conscience is the true distinction of spiritual life; and the righteous submission to it in our own hearts, we maintain, is the faith which justifies: a faith which

is an indwelling vitality which consists not in forming propositions about God and Christ, and in enforcing them or submitting to them, but in making God and Christ realities in our secret thoughts; in confidence on the worth of goodness, in allegiance to duty, and in trust in the power and immortality of truth.

2. Next I affirm that sin is evil, and that sin is punishable; and our doctrines make not light of the evil, or disguise the awfulness of the punishment. Sin is evil: we deny not that; how could we? It is an eternal truth written on the heart and life of man, proved with unequivocal and gloomy evidence in the whole history of the world. Sin is evil to the individual; evil in the sufferings it prepares for him, and a still greater evil when it hardens him beyond suffering. Each one of us will judge this question for himself according to his degree of moral sensibility, and according to the circumstances of his moral history; but whatever be that sensibility, or whatever be that history, our moments of most profound anguish have ever been those in which we have felt the shameful consciousness of wrong thoughts or wrong actions. Not, it is true, when the evil passions or evil deeds held their tyrannical sway over us, but when the spell was gone, when the mind's eye grew clear, and the hour of reflection came with sorrow, and the sad pale light spread over the hand-writing on the wall, from which conscience might shrink but could not fail to read. The worst, the most hardened, the most degraded of human creatures, those whom the world may think have bidden farewell to conscience, have moments in the dark silence of thought when the sword of remorse with all its poisoned tortures sinks into their wounded bosoms. And in such hours, it is not outward loss, or outward suffering, but inward agony that afflicts them most; it is not that they have sunk into the dregs of poverty; it is not that they have been reduced to dependence and exposed insult; it is not that pride passes them with cold and wit

ing scorn; it is not that pity and hope seem banished from their path; that all appear to frown upon them; that externally for them there is no longer peace on earth or light in heaven—it is, that the brightness and the freshness of their own hearts are gone; that sacred affections are a waste; that conscience, when not silenced into apathy, is enraged into an accuser; that their own respect is lost beyond recovery, and no delusion, however self-deceiving, can again restore it. The heart-consuming grief, the wrath and tribulation treasured up in a life of sin, the righteous judge of the earth alone can know. And these are all the more bitter if that life had ever been blessed with holier associations. There is a courage which can repel the scowl of others; there is a pride, a madness, if you will, which can despise their opinions, or feel independent of their esteem; there is a fortitude which can endure physical suffering to its last infliction; but there is nothing in time, in place, or in circumstance, which can fortify us against our own thoughts, against our own feelings, and especially the feelings of the divinity within us, that struggle to the last for empire over evil; that come ever and ever to tell us of what we had of good or might have had; that haunt us with reproach and sorrow when we have become traitors to our better nature. Not to speak of conscience with its stinging sense of violated conviction; not to speak of wasted time, ruined power, and a wreck of hopes; to say nothing of alienation from God, and the fear of a future world, I can conceive of memory dwelling on spots, which once were spots of light, becoming the tormentor of a fallen soul, the vindicator of duty and of God; I can conceive of one looking back from the bare desolateness of sin to a youth that once had been pure, full of joy and full of virtue, to homes that had been glad with every affection that sweetens life, to sabbaths that had repose for the stainless spirit, and prayer for unpolluted lips; gazing with breaking hearts and weeping eyes over a part marked with vice and misery, that had been a future

glorious with promise; all this I can conceive in connection with even the felon in his cell, or with some wretch whose cough, like a knell of despair, awakens the midnight silence of the street, whose latest pang is spent in some hidden retreat of filth and sorrow, of sin and loathsomeness.

I need not say that sin is a great social evil. The fact is urged upon us with too painful a pressure, both from history and observation. Take the history of governments and nations; wars and bloodshed stain the record over its whole extent. And whence are these, but from the struggle and rivalry of selfish and sinful passions? From whence, says the apostle James, come wars and fightings among you; come they not hence, even of your lusts? From these we have had the oppression of strength against right. From these we have had the tyrannies and cruelties with which they surrounded their thrones of iron despotism; with which they made the glory of self the affliction of millions; with which so far as their power extended, they have been the scourges and the curses of mankind. From these we had the hatred one nation against another, men arrayed against each other to hew each other down, doing all iniquities, when interest or ambition called for them, enslaving one another, and selling one another, unmindful of all the claims of fraternity in the din of faction, and losing the sense of their common humanity in the difference of clime or the colour of the skin. Take the history of laws. I shall not allege those of the criminal code which until very recently made even Christian and enlightened countries vast arenas of legalised assassination: which spread a reign of terror over the face of empires, making the scaffold and the gibbet their principal symbols of civilization, and multiplying to enormous extent the very crimes, which, pretending to punish, they only publicly authorized and exemplified. I speak here more particularly of the spirit of partiality, injustice, selfishness, and [illegible] in which much of legislation has been conceived

classes of men turning the laws to their own purposes a
leaving those unprotected who most required protectio
commonly preying most on those who least could bear
Except where the general sentiment of human right has be
too strong for narrow passions, we may see in the long cou
of ages, principle sacrificed to personal interests, the good
masses betrayed or despised, the poor scorned, the ignor
neglected, the privileged orders hedged about with all so
of protection, the classification of crime and criminals m
unfairly adjusted, the distribution of penalties most unrigh
ously allotted; this I ascribe to selfish and evil passio
Once more, take the history of religion, and you have all t
anger of faction made more stern with the rivalry of Creec
the ambition of earthly dominion more aspiring by the ad
tion of spiritual rule also; the powers of this world made mo
fearful by the powers of the world to come; both the visil
and invisible existence subjected to priestly empire, and ma
tributary to priestly aggrandizement; the sword of the civil m
gistrate which had been sharp enough with one edge to deal t
vengeance of man, receiving another edge from ecclesiastic
authority, to vindicate the judgments of God. Thus we a
compelled to read history, and thus in all its departmen
we are compelled to witness the dark traces which sin h
left upon its pages. When we turn to the world arour
us, these evils are not the less glaring. Many suffering
no doubt, are to be ascribed to our natural wants and weal
ness, but they scarcely deserve to be called evils, when w
compare them with those which spring from moral d
rangements. Poverty is not so great an affliction as a
all-devouring love for gain; sickness is not so great a mi
fortune as an insatiate desire for pleasure; and the ills
poverty and pain together, are not as fatal as the irritab
wish for distinction which rules so widely in the world, wit
its fierce blood of turbulent passions. To these there are
be ascribed the worst social miseries that grieve the be

hearts, and to remove or ameliorate which the finest spirits have ever directed their labours. To these we are to ascribe the covetousness which closes the hand of bounty, and shuts up the bowels of compassion; which becomes insensible both to justice and mercy; to these we are to ascribe all forms of sensuality, and all the abuses of passion; to these we are to ascribe all vices, material or malignant: and who, though he had the capacious mind of an archangel, can count the miseries which in all shapes spread contagion through society? Independently of those evils which no human eye can reach, those which present themselves on the very surface of observation are sufficiently extensive and fearful; intemperance, ignorance, grossness, hatred, strifes, with all their gloomy appendages; of unhappy homes; of loud and laughing and blushless infamy; of mad licentiousness, and late despair; of lost health, lost honesty, lost reason, which respectively close their career in the hospital, the prison, or the lunatic asylum.

3. As to evidence, then, for the existence of guilt, as to its extent and its evil, I think I can go as far as any Calvinist. I see the fact, and I have no wish to disguise it; it startles, but it does not subvert my faith. I grant sin to be evil—evil in the inward spirit—evil on the outward life—evil to the individual—evil to the species—evil in this world—evil in the next. In a certain sense, I am not prepared to deny that it leaves injurious consequences, which may be eternal; that the loss of innocence, that subversion of moral tastes, may implant habits which, for aught I know, shall be an everlasting injury to the soul, not utterly to destroy its happiness, or stop its progression, but to deprive it of advantages and advancement which a purer moral state would have given it. The evils of sin I hold to be terrible; the penalty of sin I hold to be inevitable—to be removed by no sacrifice, to be washed out by no expiation—to be escaped only in the criminals rising out of the corrup-

tion by experience and wisdom, to a purer moral state. punishment of sin I believe to be not only inevitab also enduring, enduring in proportion to indulgence ar lignity. Thoughts, I admit, which have wrought them into the very texture of the intellectual nature; feelings have rooted themselves into the heart; habits that grown into instinct, are not speedily to be destroyed. punishment, in my idea, is identical with moral disc and moral discipline I consider to be such an arrangem circumstances in the providence of God as shall lead self-correction; such a process of spiritual training as us the consciousness of our own liberty, but yet accor God's wise ends by God's boundless power. In bu then, the structure of our character, our Creator wor by miracle, but by experience, and this experience i slow and painful. I believe most sincerely and profc in a future punishment; not vindictive, but correctiv all wise punishment is, and must be, corrective. Th dispensations of God are not completed in this life, I all the moral aspects of things here below make most fest, and all analogies intimate, if Scripture had not exp declared, that after death there is to be a more distinct bition of the divine government. That the results o racter formed in the present life are to be carried into the and to influence it, I conceive our whole nature argues. existence, as spiritual beings, is properly connected an tinuous; one state prognosticates another; and no tw absolutely distinct and separate. Our spiritual life co of thought united to thought, and feeling to feeling, on rating on the other, or producing it, of a mysterious ch consciousness, bound from link to link by successive i ries, preserving unbroken the identity of our existence. hood is the growth of our youth, and immortality is the g of our manhood; and the impressions of character pass one stage to another, along the line of succession

sequence. There are no extremes, except to our outward observation. Looking at one stage of life, and then, after a long interval, seeing in the same person the apparently opposite characteristics, we take those things to be antagonists which are bound together by the inevitable connexion of cause and effect. The dreamer of youth becomes, perhaps, the misanthropist of age; the prodigal of youth, it may be, grows into the miser of age; the principle of action may in each case be the same—vanity or self-love; the passion is identical in principle, and changed only in form, from a change in circumstances. If we should meet an honest rustic in his peaceful fields, innocent and contented; if we should afterwards by accident behold him on a scaffold, it would be to us a seeming and terrible incongruity. But why? The two events are in our minds in naked contrast: could we, however, pierce the Spirit and trace the life of that unfortunate—watch it from the first intrusive evil thought successively dwelt on; from actions slightly wrong, unceasingly reiterated and darkening with every repetition, until the last deadly volition, and the last awful deed, we should have an analysis of sad consistency and of profound interest. There is something sublime in the reflection, that every human creature who treads the earth and breathes the air, has an inward history, a history unread by every eye but God's; a history of solemn import, that has definite impression on the concerns of the universe, and is to live for ever in the annals of eternity.

In ordinary phraseology, we speak of our existence as if death made a chasm in it; but temporal and eternal are but distinctions of imagination; our eternal life commences, and our earthly is but the first stage, the infancy of that awful and endless existence. If I see in our nature that which can survive change, I see that also in it which can take materials of joy and sorrow along with it. The faculties that make our life here must be those which shall make that which is to come. Memory then will be there, whic[illegible]

surrection of our by-gone experience; and whether for good or evil, it will call up the spirits of buried deeds, and as the life has been, will be an angel of heaven or a minister of hell;—imagination, which may have been the nurse of piety or the slave of passion,—intellect, which may have had the glow of the seraph or the malice of the demon: accordingly, then, as these powers have been properly directed or abused, every instinct of our moral nature tells us must be the joy of a righteous soul, or the agony of an evil heart. What treasure will the good man find he has laid up for his immortal life, when the past arises to him in the lustre of a new world: the consciousness of good thoughts and good actions, the peace of assimilation with God, and of union with the best of men: the immortal love of those with whom he had companioned in his earthly journey, the gratitude of many from whose eyes he had banished tears, and from whose bosoms he had plucked out despair; who has been true to the claims of his nature, and accomplished the work of a disciple of Christ, and a child of God, and a brother of man. On the other side, what are to be his feelings, who awakens in eternity with emotions of isolation and repulsion, condemned in his own conscience, who now discovers he has all to learn which can fit him for the society of noble spirits, whose expanded faculties flash shame and sorrow on his guilty soul, and show him that his whole course was folly: the sensualist, who stultified his reason and profaned his affections: the hypocrite, that toiled but for the outward, betrayed his convictions, and was a living and incarnate lie; before his fellows, a whited sepulchre; before his God, a corrupted mass of falsehood: the profane man, on whose lips prayer rarely dwelt, but to whom cursing and bitterness were familiar: the persecutor, who finds at last that he has hated or tormented others for a falsehood, or a sound: the man of wild ambition, who, despising the true glory which comes from God, and consists in doing right, spreads terror around him, in pursuing a phantom: the worldling, whose spirit was en-

slaved to those treasures for which he wasted life, and which he has left behind him in the dust. The sense of right and wrong is powerful and eternal; and when bad men resist it, it may be safely trusted to effect its own work, both of correction and of punishment.

II. I shall here review some of the arguments pleaded for the eternal misery of the wicked, and state briefly the grounds on which I reject it.

When we consider the mild and merciful spirit of the Gospel,—when we reflect on it as a revelation of divine love made manifest in the most perfect form of human love,—we are at first sight astonished that so tremendous an idea as that of an infinite and eternal hell could ever have been connected with it, or so wretched a one as a seclusive, and comparatively all but an unpeopled heaven. And truly this could have never been, had the doctrine of immortal life been apprehended in the full spirit of Christianity. But the fact of man's immortality made manifest in the Gospel has not generally been so apprehended, it has had from the first to contend against darkening and perverting influences. Converts to the faith of Christ brought with them many of the prejudices and errors of their former training, and what in the early ages of the church was the result of ignorance, in later ones became sanctified into the testimony of faith. Those who came from heathen superstitions to the religion of Christ, brought with them minds filled with material images; their worship or their age left no means for any others; and their belief in a future existence of necessity became shaped by these associations. A sacrificial worship symbolized their gods of wrath, and what they had attributed to many, they were unable to dissociate from one; physical pains and pleasures comprehended their whole notion of retribution and reward, and these their Christianity made eternal. Their hell and their heaven were therefore fashioned from the rude conceptions of their previous superstitions, and from the symbolic language of the Gospe'

crudely understood. The everlasting hell which thence grew out of the mistakes of the vulgar, and the speculations of the learned, it was too much the interest of priests to maintain, not to receive the sanction of the church with an earnest and zealous promulgation. Connected with other doctrines, what immense power was thus placed in the hands of ecclesiastics! With what deep and gloomy awe it shrouded the character of the priest! Once in the place of his ministry, he stood there not as the simple teacher of his brethren, and his equals, not as the mere expounder of his master's gospel, but as the commisioned delegate of heaven, authorized by God to denounce his everlasting wrath on the guilty, to wield the thunder of an eternal vengeance. We cannot estimate the power with which such a doctrine would invest the hierarchy, and we are not therefore surprised that it is the last which any orthodox priesthood would be willing to resign,—one of those prime doctrines, to deny which has ever been stamped as heresy, from Origen to Servetus. If even in these times, when protestantism and other causes have done so much to take away the reverence with which the ministry was once surrounded, highly-wrought pictures of endless misery give men not deemed to have any supernatural authority such influence over the minds of their hearers, such despotism over their feelings and their consciences, what must it have been when superstition bent down the votaries before the church in prostrate submission, when the servants of her altar were regarded as the direct messengers of God,—as those ordained to stand between hell and heaven, with the key of both; to announce glad tidings, or empty the vials of indignation; to distribute God's grace, or to proclaim his malediction. Many causes have been assigned for the growth of ecclesiastical supremacy, but this doctrine I am persuaded was the greatest of all; the priestly throne, which raised its ambition to the stars, was girded around by the lightning and tempests of eternal terrors. The doctrine of eternal torments derives much strength from ecclesiastical

interest; and it is further sustained by all the logic of theological subtlety. Many writers on divinity seem to find a strange and morbid pleasure in describing the tortures of the wicked, both in nature and duration, exhausting all analogies to illustrate the incomprehensible; and all modes of thought and expression to explain the infinite. On this doctrine the transition from Romanism to Protestantism has impressed no change. If the Reformation broke some bonds that enslaved the freedom of religion, it removed no cloud which obscured its heaven: the fierce teachings of Augustine were only made more complete and systematic by the still fiercer doctrines of Calvin; and the dark sketch of eternal reprobation drawn in its outlines by the Carthaginian monk, received its last touches from the Genevan master: what in the olden church was broached only in the cautious reasonings of the schools, has in Protestantism been made the staple *materiel* of theological declamation.

These doctrines have not only done much to obscure men's minds as to the condition of the wicked in a future state, but also to mislead them in an equal degree on that of the righteous. This we observe in many of the popular notions of heaven. To millions, heaven seems to be for the soul what the grave is for the body—a place of mere repose. If something more than this, an elysium for indolence, a kind of region of complacent idealism, where the faithful and elect are to enjoy ecstacies and prayer, musings and melodies, which the coarse struggles of earth forbade, in which the cares of the world left no time to engage;—the clear skies and still waters of paradise, the golden harps, the incense, and the music of angels, to relieve from weariness, strife, and pain, toil-worn and time-worn spirits. Nor is such view of heaven ungrateful, tried as we are here with sin and tired as we are with labour; but this must not exhaust our thoughts of future bliss. Our highest happiness, even in heaven, must consist in highest action: no other happi

ness can exist for a moral and intellectual being than that which calls his faculties into energy, and supplies both with materials and objects on which to engage them. Our ideas in general of heaven are too much those of negation or contrast. We are here in sojourn, we think only of home there; we are here in conflict, we think only of peace there; we are here in labour, and there we only picture our rest; we forget that all these are worth nothing but as means to higher purposes, unsuitable as final conditions to creatures who bear within them the life that is henceforth to go on with that of the All-creative God.

I may just observe here, and it is pleasant to be able to do so, that the opinion against which this Lecture is directed, is an illustration of the fact that tenets die out practically before they are renounced theoretically. It is well known to all who hear recent orthodox preaching, or who read recent orthodox works on practical piety, how little compared with former times is the space now occupied in them by Satan and damnation. The imagination is not tortured as it once was, with all horrible and hideous representations of human suffering, which taste and devotion alike reject. Why, even in the Lecture of my reverend and respected opponent, though directly on the subject, all the repulsive features are lost in a most moderate and temporate exposition. Such errors let alone will gradually of themselves expire.

1. In support of the doctrine of eternal torments, it is in the first place pleaded that Scripture expressly declares it. This conclusion is founded principally on the words and phrases correspondent to our "ever," "everlasting," "for ever and ever," &c. That in numerous passages they imply duration without end or limit, we readily admit. It is needless to point them out. We are then told that this must be their invariable meaning, except some evident fragility in the object to which they are applied implies the contrary. To assert that they have the highest force when connected with

future punishment, is to assume what is to be proved; for the nature of the object is the very question in dispute. If we can show that the words have not unvarying literal application, then the subject is at least open to discussion; but if it be asserted they must mean endless duration, because future punishment is in its *nature* endless, the point is dogmatically decided, and there is no further possibility of argument. If every phrase of Scripture is to be taken as a rigid definition, then we are to believe that Christ held himself in his own hands when he said, "this is my body." Now the instances in the Bible, in all parts of it in which phrases disputed between us and our opponents indicated limited duration, and only that, are numerous beyond counting:*—sometimes, not longer than a man's life, as when after certain conditions of compact, the slave is said to serve his master for ever. In other cases it is more extended, but still temporary; as when the land of Judea is called an everlasting possession; the law an everlasting covenant; the nation a people established for ever; the hierarchy an everlasting priesthood. As to the last, the writer to the Hebrews tells us, that "the priesthood being changed there is made a necessity of change also of the law; for there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness of it."

Αιων (the principal word in the Greek original), Mr. Simpson in his Essay on the duration of future rewards and punishments (p. 17) asserts, occurs about a hundred times in the New Testament, in seventy of which at least it is clearly used for limited duration. In the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament it is even repeated, and several times it is repeated twice, and in two instances signifies no longer a period than the life of one man only. "It is," says the same critic, "an observation of the utmost importance, that when

* See Ex. xxi. 1—6. Eccles. i. 4. 1 Cor. viii. 13. Gen. xvii. 8, 13, 1[illegible] Numb. xxv. 13.

αιων, or *αιωνιος*, are applied to the future punishment of wicked, they are never joined to life, immortality, incorr tibility, but are always connected with fire, or with t punishment, pain, or second death, which is effected means of fire. Now since fire, which consumes or dec poses other perishable bodies, is itself of a dissoluble perishable nature, this intimates a limitation of the per of time." The phrase, "everlasting fire," is plainly a me phor, a metaphor which the Jews would be at no loss understand: the associations which they derived from the in the valley of Hinnom would render it sufficiently int ligible.

The phraseology was familiar in the Old Testament. F unquenchable, fire not to be quenched, is used in many pla in which it cannot be literal. Thus Jeremiah (xvii. 2 threatens the Jews, in the name of God, for their breach the sabbath, "then will I kindle a fire in the gates (of Jer salem,) and it shall devour the palaces thereof, and it sh not be quenched." So Isaiah (xxxiv. 9, &c.), speaking Idumea, "and the streams thereof shall be turned into pitc and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land there shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched nigl nor day: the smoke thereof shall go up for ever."—Whi on this part of the subject, I shall just allude to a rema made on Mr. Grundy's view of the text in which it is said the wicked that their worm dieth not, and their fire is n quenched. After quoting a passage from Mr. Grundy's Di course, and making some comment on it, the lecturer we on to assert, "In a note moreover, we are informed that t foregoing criticism is founded on the assumption of the pa sage really referring to future punishment, which, howeve the preacher affirms it does not. For, he adds, we have befo shown, the worm has been long since dead, and for ages h the fire been quenched." The impression which this use Mr. Grundy's language had a tendency to leave, is one whol

foreign to his meaning; for it would seem to imply that Mr. Grundy asserted the extension already of retributive penalty in the future life. The plain import is, that our Lord used a metaphor taken from perishable things, which have, in fact, perished—and thence it cannot be proved that he referred to an eternal state of suffering. The allusion, as is well known, is taken from the close of Isaiah, where, of the worshippers going to Jerusalem, it is said, they shall look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed, for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched. It is plain that here it means not eternity, and though applied by Christ to future punishment, it does not follow from the language that he means to imply unending punishment. Archbishop Newcome's language is as strong as Mr. Grundy's; for he also says, "in the valley of Hinnom, the worm died when its food failed—aud the pile on which human sacrifices were burnt to Moloch was often extinguished." To the writer of the lectures which have been referred to, we are all deeply indebted for an example set us in times and under circumstances of which we can but little now estimate the difficulty; we owe him the tribute of our respect for an honest and fearless advocacy of truth, of mental and religious freedom, at the expense of painful and personal sacrifices.

Thus, while none of these passages that I have referred to prove this doctrine, there are many scriptures at utter variance with it. God is again and again called the father that created us. We are taught that he is good, and that his tender mercies are over all his works. God is love. He will not always chide, we are told, neither will he keep his anger for ever; that he will not cast off for ever; that he hath not shut up his tender mercies in anger. Finally, almost in the close of the sacred volume, we are informed that there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, neither crying, neither shall they suffer any more pain; for the former things are passed away. Both these cannot be true. It is a moral contradiction to conceive a

gracious and merciful God, creating beings with immortal life, and then rendering them eternally wretched: we have but one alternative, either we must renounce our faith in these declarations, or we renounce it in the benevolence of God. There are but two texts, one in Daniel, and the other in Matthew, in which there is any remarkable force. In these it is said that the wicked go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal, and on these two phrases the tremendous doctrine is built up. The duration of both are urged to be equal, and we are told, that if we deny eternal damnation, we deny eternal life. No such thing. Reason, feeling, nature, justice, moral sentiment, the belief of a perfect God, and the force of scriptural evidence, coincide with the one and are repugnant to the other. There is not a single proof which can be urged in favour of a future life, which is not an irrefutable argument against future perdition. If you deduce the ideas from the goodness of God, from his truth, from his wisdom, it is essentially subversive of this dark dogma. If you deduce the idea from the nature of man, it comes to the same purpose; if you conclude he is to live for ever, because of his infinite and progressive faculties of reason and of conscience, you must by the same argument infer that he is to live to a better end than to be cast eternally into hell. If he was worth creation, he is worth preserving; if he is worth preserving, he is worth being made good and happy. If a great multitude of immortals are to endure infinite pain, so far as they are concerned, the existence of a soul and the being of a God are infinite evils.

The spirit and the letter of Scripture is in favour of this glorious doctrine. Every Scripture which proves that God is good and not malignant is in favour of it; every Scripture which proves that God is a restorer and not a destroyer is in favour of it; every Scripture which proves that God has more the desire to pardon than to punish proves it. To this effect I might quote passages to greater extent than the whole of this

lecture occupies; the selection must therefore be limited, not by the want of matter but by the want of space. "God is love: and he so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life: for God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved."* "Jehovah is full of compassion, slow to anger and of great mercy. Jehovah is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works. All thy works do praise thee, O Jehovah: and thy saints shall bless thee." We are exhorted to "taste and see that the Lord is good." "The goodness of God," we are told, "endureth continually." "The Lord God," we are assured, "is merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." "The Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you if ye turn to him." "The Lord is merciful and gracious; slow to anger and plenteous in mercy: he hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities: for as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us: Like as a father pitieth his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear him: for he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." And from our earliest prayer to our dying hour, we are taught in the simplest and sublimest of all supplications to open our address to God thus; "Our Father who art in heaven." We read evermore in Scripture that God's is not an everlasting anger; as such passages as the following testify: "His anger endureth but for a moment." "He will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger for ever." "Hath God forgotten to be gracious; hath

* 1 John iv. 16; John iii. 16, 17.

he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" "I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wrath: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made." Correspondent with the doctrine of these expressions, and with the spirit of the whole Gospel, is a passage that I quote from a book which Protestants in general declare not to be canonical. "Thou hast mercy upon all; for thou canst do all things, and winkest at the sins of men, because they should amend. For thou lovest all things that are, and abhorrest nothing which thou hast made: for never wouldst thou have made any thing if thou hadst hated it. And how could any thing have endured, if it had not been thy will; or been preserved, if not called by thee? But thou sparest thine, for they are thine, O Lord, thou lover of souls. For thine incorruptible spirit is in all things; therefore chastenest thou them, by little and little, that offend, and warnest them by putting them in remembrance wherein they have offended, that leaving their wickedness, they may believe on thee, O Lord. For thy power is the beginning of righteousness; and because thou art the Lord of all, it maketh Thee to be gracious unto all. But thou, O God, art gracious and true: long suffering, and in mercy ordering all things: for if we sin, we are thine, knowing thy power; but we will not sin, knowing that we are accounted thine." *

Once more, whatever theoretical view we may happen to hold on the redemption of man by Christ, the end and glory of that redemption requires as the only consistent consummation, the ultimate happiness and virtue of mankind. To this purport I shall adduce one passage of Scripture and quote a commentary. The passage is Rom. v. 12—21, and the commentary is by Dr. S. Smith. "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and thus death hath passed

* Ps. xcv. 8, 9, 10; Ps. xxxiv. 8; Ps. lii. 1; Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7; 2 Chron. xxx. 9; Ps. ciii. 8, &c.; Matt. vi. 9; Ps. xxx. 5; Ps. ciii. 9; Ps. lxxxvii. 7; Isa. lxvii. 16; Wisdom of Solomon, xi. 23—26.

upon all men, inasmuch as all have sinned: (for until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed, where there is no law:) nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgressions, who is a figure (a type) of him that was to come: (yet the free gift likewise is not so, as was the offence: for if through the offence of one, many have died, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. Neither is the gift so, as it was by one that sinned; for judgment was of one offence to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if, by the offence of one, death reigned by one, much more those who receive the abounding of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, even Jesus Christ:) so then as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; so likewise by the righteousness of one the free gift hath come upon all men to justification of life. For as by the disobedience of one many were made sinners, so likewise, by the obedience of one, many shall be made righteous. Moreover, the law entered that sin might abound: but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ, our Lord."

"In this passage all men are said to have been made mortal by the offence of Adam, and here the phrase 'all men' must necessarily be understood to signify every individual of the human race. Though the style of the apostle in this passage is remarkably intricate and perplexed, yet his meaning is clear, and scarcely to be misunderstood. He affirms that death entered into the world by Adam, and that in consequence of his offence, death passed upon all men, or all men became mortal. Thus many were made sinful or mortal by one. In this sense Adam was a type of Jesus Christ: for as all mankind became subject

to great privation or suffering in consequence of the offe
of one, namely Adam, so the greatest privileges and blessi
are bestowed on all mankind in consequence of the obedie
of one, namely, Jesus Christ. But it is only in this sin
circumstance that all suffer and all are benefited by one, t
there is any analogy between them: for in every other resp
there is the greatest possible difference between Adam a
Christ. The act entailing such important consequences up
the whole human race, was, on the part of Adam, an act
transgression, on the part of Christ an act of obedien
And there is a still further disparity between them; for t
calamities resulting from the act of transgression were t
legal punishment of the offence; but the blessings accrui
from the act of obedience were not such as could be claim
by law, but were the free, unpurchased unmerited gift
God. And the consequences of the act of transgression an
the act of obedience may be placed in still more strikin
contrast: for the act of transgression was but one, and y
death, with all the calamities connected with it, passed upo
the whole human race; while the act of obedience provide
justification for many offences: nor is this all; for the bless
ings procured for all mankind by the obedience of Chris
are unspeakably greater than the calamities brought upo
them by the offence of Adam."

"This is undoubtedly the argument of the Apostle. Not
withstanding all the obscurity and perplexity of his language
whoever reads the passage with attention, must perceive thes
were the ideas which were in his mind. And in the whole com
pass of Christian truth, there is no doctrine more importan
or more glorious than that which is thus disclosed. It is a di
rect and positive declaration, that the blessings, provided by th
obedience of Christ, shall, in number of persons who partak
them, be co-extensive with the calamities produced by th
offence of Adam, and in their magnitude and value greatl
exceed them. This is sufficient; this is decisive; these idea

were in the mind of the apostle; this is the doctrine which he plainly and indisputably teaches, and nothing more is necessary. For, even though it should be proved that he illustrates his doctrine by a fanciful allusion to what was itself only an allegory; that his reasoning is not in every respect complete, and even, that he did not himself fully comprehend all the glorious consequences of the sublime truth he disclosed, that truth would be neither the less important nor the less certain. The great fact itself, the fact which it was his object and his office to teach, and in which he could not be mistaken, was, that the blessings produced by the obedience of Christ shall be as extensive as the evils occasioned by the offence of Adam; that all who suffer from the one shall partake of the benefits of the other, while these benefits themselves shall infinitely exceed and overbalance the calamities entailed on mankind by the first transgression. The conclusion is inevitable, that the whole human race shall ultimately be restored to virtue and happiness. By one passage of Scripture then, at least, the doctrine which it is the object of this work to establish, is positively and expressly affirmed; and this is decisive." *

To sustain this doctrine we hear analogy also pleaded. Pain, it is said, has no tendency to correct. This is not true. Pain often does correct—and many are led back to virtue by means of a sad experience. Pain physically and morally is the great instrument of warning. But though it were fully granted that pure pain were not a corrective agency, it may, in connection with other influences, bring healing to the soul. We never see it unmixed in this world, and we have no just ground to conclude it will be so in another. How often is it the means of drawing forth a mercy and a grace from others that softens the stony heart of the transgressor. How often, when the sinner is laid low—yea, and by the very

* Dr. Southwood Smith on the Divine Government.

effect of crimes, will a kind look or word, an instance of forbearance or forgiveness, work a regeneration on his nature. How often will the son who plagued his parents' life, and whitened their hair with sorrow, when driven by misery to seek again the shelter of a home, be sweetened into meekness by a mother's love, and be raised again to dignity by a father's generosity. If pain then, by making us feel the goodness of others, will so frequently incite us to deserve it, are we to conceive that an experience, with clearer knowledge of God's love, shall be entirely ineffectual? It is said, that men grow more heardened in sin the longer they continue in it. I allow it was a generous truth: and yet the thought of a moment—the visit of one pure memory, may suffice to change a life of crime. But our argument is, that men will not continue in sin; and it will not be asserted, that if reformation is at all possible, God will refuse the means, and make crime eternal. It is further stated that the wicked, by force of numbers and society with each other, grow increasingly worse: it is to be proved, which it is not and cannot, that in a future existence there is any such distribution either local or moral. This doctrine is not only unfounded in analogy, but contradicted by it—there must be either destruction or renovation: so it is in the natural world, and so it is in the moral. Nothing can sustain continued existence in a state of extreme disorganization; a certain amount of consistency and harmony is an essential condition of every being—without this, there must be dissolution and destruction. Sin being then confusion in the soul and in society, an eternal state of progressive sin is inconceivable. Pain, being in like manner disorganization in body or mind, an eternity of growing pain is equally inconceivable. Continued and extreme pain therefore must either destroy its subject or destroy itself; and then on this argument alone we perceive that eternal torture is a theological figment; a nonentity and impossibility.

The belief is further pressed upon us on grounds of moral

influence. This is but an additional argument against it, for it either has no effect or a bad one. It has no effect, from its vagueness and its incomprehensibleness. It does not fasten on the moral feelings—it sinks dead by its own ponderousness. It has no effect from its inconsistency with human nature; there is no affinity between a finite being and boundless torture; and thence from the want of truth there is also a want of power. It has no effect, because there is an instinctive abhorrence in the heart against it; and there is an instinctive justice which repels it; the imagination reels before it—the mind retreats from it, and finds that it is too odious even to be looked at. That it has no effect may be seen to a vast extent: millions in all countries profess to believe it, and among these have been, and are, many of the most abandoned that ever brought shame upon their nature; and yet a faith in hell gave them no fear of vice. So far as it has influence it is of a bad kind; because it familiarizes the mind with coarse images; because it breathes into obedience a spirit of slavish fear; because it makes terror an instrument of religion; because it throws darkness on the ways of providence; because it undermines filial confidence in God, and puts a limit either to his power or his love. The doctrine of ultimate and universal salvation lowers the sanctions of righteousness. But what is the true motive to goodness, what is the spirit of it—that which unites us most to God? Love, not fear; not fear of hell; and in the sense of terror not even fear of God himself. Fear is mere submission to force, not the willing service of heart-felt appreciation; the crouching of a slave in outward show to the despot whom in his soul he thoroughly detests. Now as we cannot love by constraint, what ideas of God are most likely to move our affections, and consequently produce in us the true spirit of obedience? Evidently his benevolence, his purity, his disinterested goodness, his fatherly nature—to be drawn to him with the cords

of our hearts, we see him in the clear light of his moral beauty. It is rather paradoxical that these doctrines on the power of fear, the righteousness of vindictive punishment, and the limits of moral reformation, should be propagated in our times, when all the practical tendencies of society are in contradiction. The influence of conviction and not of force, the influence of mind and not pain, is the growing spirit of the time, and a faith, which puts no bound to hope; for the love of man is a motive deepening ever in the great social heart. This is the blessing of our day,—it has enlightened education, and softened the rigour of instruction; it is mingling the gentleness of mercy with the austerity of punishment; it is working to restore the criminal and not to destroy, tempering discipline with wisdom, believing that corrective amelioration is most useful and most just; in the same believing spirit it is sending a vast spiritual agency into every realm of vice: while thus philosophy and philanthropy labour in the trust they shall leave men better than they found them, exploding the errors which had been the greatest curses to mankind, these are the very errors which theology sanctifies, which it is heresy to deny: whilst a moral and merciful civilization is exerted to exalt man, theology continues to deface the image of God; the one scattering beauty on mortality, and the other spreading darkness on eternity; the one removing pain, and the other preaching it.

The doctrine we oppose is further defended on the ground that sin is an infinite offence, that man is therefore an infinite offender; and that an infinite offender deserves unending punishment. The assertion, that man can be an infinite offender, is wholly inconsistent with the views which the orthodox themselves present of man. To be a transgressor in any degree, implies the possession of a noble nature, much less to be an infinite transgressor; but with the miserable and contemptible creature which Calvinism describes as man, it is impossible to associate any idea that is either noble or in-

finite, for good or for evil. We may assume another mode of reasoning. The obedience of the law is righteousness, the transgression of the law is sin. These are correspondent definitions. By every rule, therefore, of logical deduction, if a single act of sin is an infinite evil, a single act of obedience is an infinite good; and on the same grounds of justice by which one man is doomed to an everlasting hell, the other merits an eternal heaven.

But to speak of man at all as an infinite offender, is to set common sense at defiance. Whence can be the infinitude of his offence? Not in its origin, not in its effects, not in its duration: not in its origin, for it is produced in limited faculties; not in its effects, for the errors of a created nature, counteracted by an uncreated omnipotence, can never be infinite, can never be irremediable; not in its duration, for the life of one man, the lives of all men to the end of human generations, are but a point in the universe and government of God. Sin is either a state of mind or a state of action; but whether as one or the other, it must of necessity be limited. Were the career of man extended to that of Methusalem, and his powers as capacious as his years were many; were the whole of that existence a succession of crime, uncheered by a solitary virtue; were the energy of the mightiest intellect devoted to contrive guilt, and the efforts of the most ingenious sinfulness given to its execution; were every creation of fancy a vision of impurity, every instinct an impulse to cruelty, every emotion a movement of malignity, yet even thus horrible, we could not with truth call man an infinite offender. Neither in desire nor in action can he be such. Not in desire, for there is no man that wishes, there never has been the man that wished, absolute, unmingled, endless evil; not in action, for there is no man, whatever the malignity of his intention, has unlimited power of execution. If sin is an infinite offence, then all sins are equal, for infinity has no degrees; if sinners are infinite transgressors, then

criminals have no distinctions; transgression has no gradations, and the whole moral space is annihilated between him who stands on the very margin of heaven, and him who is already plunged into hell; the same impassable gulf which exists between their conditions, exists also between their characters.

Man is not an infinite offender, nor yet is he an incorrigible one. There is nothing in his nature or history which justifies the conclusion. There is no point of moral baseness so low that we can mark it as a hopeless condition. He is not immutable; and as change is possible, changes for the better may be looked for, as well as changes for the worse. Such changes have been; the painful experience of evil and wrong-doing, however slow and vacillating, always drives towards them; all observation, therefore, is in favour of our expectation. We look not on the deepest, the deadliest, and the worst instance of human depravity, as beyond correction, beyond improvement, beyond the power of Almighty God; we look upon no ignorance that may not be enlightened; upon no vice that may not be removed; upon no human countenance so scarred with the traces of depravity, as to leave nothing visible but the hand-writing of reprobation; God forbid that we should behold any human being with humanity's capacities, destined, beyond amendment, to hopeless corruption and to incorrigible misery. I deny not the existence and the delusion of vice. I deny not the abuse of the noblest faculties, or the perversion of the best affections, but I do deny that the human soul is ever so wrecked or lost as to become utterly hopeless. The man of pleasure may turn from joy to joy, and collect nothing for his home but weariness and disgust; the man of ambition may sacrifice health and repose, honour and probity; the covetous man may, during a long life, drudge away days of labour, and toss through nights of care, to die in the possession of what he never enjoyed; the indolent and the prodigal may live as if there were

no *tomorrow;* the vicious and profane may reel on, reckless of a future existence and a future judgment. We have all seen every human passion making havoc upon virtue; but we have also seen the passions, carrying with them their own sting and their own punishment, and in that sting and punishment, to a certain extent at least, they have contained their own amelioration and amendment. That human beings have been raised from their lowest debasement, that they have been emancipated from the worst of moral bondage, that they have been purified from the deepest of pollutions, we have many consolatory evidences. In every nation of earth that now enjoys the blessings of religion, of liberty, of arts, of moral and social refinement, we have proofs, that by gradual and progressive improvement, these human beings may be delivered from the very worst estate of ignorance, vice, destitution, and brutality. For what are the nations that we now glory to acknowledge, but instances the most undeniable, that man is not only an imperishable, but also an improvable creature? I have seen beings in their thoughtlessness, the victims of their own vanity, sink miserable and despairing into the terror which they had prepared for themselves: but must I say, that they shall never throughout eternity discover the littleness of the objects they desired, nor abstain from chasing the phantoms that misled them? I have seen men insanely and foolishly toil for all that makes life a trifle, at the loss of all that makes it a glory; I have read in history, and I can recal by memory, the experience of those who spent all they had of energy or misused all they had of goodness to obtain that which at last they felt their torture; I have seen the turbulent nature soften into peace, the thoughtless awakened into wisdom and action, the profane elevated into reverence, the impious bending to pray, the angry subdued into meekness, the proud converted to the wisdom of humility, the hard-hearted melted to the goodness of mercy.

Should it be said that this argument is too narrow, and

appeals only to immediate feeling, let us then take a wid sphere, and try the principle by a larger test. Call to yo attention the varieties of mankind, of their present a past condition, of their present and past circumstanc Many millions exist on the wide surface of the glob among whom the elements of moral redemption ha never had operation, on whose benighted souls a ray Christian light has never dawned, hearts which have nev felt the bliss of holy liberty, and bosoms that have nev burned with heavenly fire. Take up a map of the worl cast your eye over its boundaries and divisions, from pole pole, and from meridian to meridian; conceive the myria of rational beings who swarm along that surface; reflect on th wonderful diversities in their conditions and their training pass over the dreary frosts of one country, and the deadenin heat of others; wherever you turn, humanity meets you unde different forms, and in various circumstances—with habit more or less corrupted, with morals more or less pure, wit religion more or less enlightened or absurd; let me then as any enlightened thinker, any one who has studied human na ture, whether all these are to be arranged under one genera classification. Consider the tribes around the arctic, bu ried in darkness; pierce into the unexplored regions o Africa; go over the deserts of Arabia; walk among the tents of its predatory and pastoral populations; traverse Persia, India, Tartary, the islands that dimly gleam through the Southern Ocean, and wherever you go, mankind are in various moral positions, and consequently under various terms of moral probation. Shall then that all-seeing Creator, to whom every heart is open, place all these motley tribes under one system of judgment? It cannot be. Shall beings born in regions of darkness be condemned for want of light—beings who had never breathed but of impurity, for not being sanctified—beings bred amidst idols, for being idolatrous? Taking thus into view the populations of the earth, we have be-

fore us an infinity of moral conditions; and yet the differences are not greater between the extremes of them than those we might select in a single country or a single city; than those, in fact, which we know to exist. Respecting the terms of probation, a New Zealander is not at a greater distance from an Englishman, than some Englishmen are from others. When we think then how many are ignorant and suffering by the very necessity of destiny, and by the same fate vicious and depraved, if the passage of a breath end all hope of amendment, our faith must cease in divine justice, as well as divine wisdom, and our perplexity be turned to despair.

We look on man, not as a member of a sect, but as a child of God; and once more, we ask, if he is not an infinite offender, nor yet incorrigible, is he not worth the correction? If his purity and happiness be within the bounds of possibility, if his eternal misery by any degree of energy can be averted, are we to believe that a God who has infinite benevolence *wills* him to perish; are we to believe that a God who has infinite power will exert none of it to save the most glorious of his works from utter destruction? Can we suppose that God, omnipotent and most wise, would reverse eternally such capacities for goodness and happiness, and instead of training them to be instruments of boundless utility, would condemn them to be agents of eternal evil? Will not God rather choose to sow the field of everlasting life with seeds of holiness and bliss, than to scathe it to a ruin and a wilderness? I would not strip the future of its awe; no terror can be equal to the truth; it is the most solemn anticipation that can ever come upon the mind, and I maintain that nothing the most fearing imagination conceived in its wildest apprehensions ever equalled the reality: but, for God's universe and for God's creatures, there is always hope; in God's power and wisdom there are limitless means, and at last there will be universal peace and universal emancipation. If creatures are not ultimately and universally happy, it must be either from the

want of ability in God, or the want of inclination; and this difficulty pressing itself on the mind of a powerful and pious orthodox writer, he chose, in accounting for the loss of souls, to suppose that theologians had mistaken in their theories the nature of divine omnipotence; that love and power have distinct offices; but if he were to circumscribe either attribute in God, it would be power and not love. On the ground of an eternal perdition, such attribute as a *moral* omnipotence can truly be ascribed to God. The able writer to whom I have alluded has seen to the bottom of the difficulty, and believing as he does most sincerely in eternal suffering, believing also as he does with equal sincerity in the infinite love of God, he is compelled so far as the human will is concerned to circumscribe the sphere and action of divine omnipotence, or rather to deny it altogether. "The truth is," he says, "that the only rational conclusion we can arrive at in the matter, is that in the nature of things no such attribute can exist. And until the cloud, which its supposed existence throws on every procedure of divine providence, is dissipated, we must either not think at all, or think amiss on that subject in comparison of which all other subjects are unimportant, namely the character of God: I know that many may, at first sight, be startled at the assertion, that the power of God can in any sense be limited. In this, as in various instances, they will object to the same truth as a distinct proposition, which they will freely assume and take for granted in all their reasonings. These very persons will speak of Providence as devising means and moving by gradual advancement to the accomplishment of an end. If asked, why not decree the end without the means? they answer, because it could not be attained, at least so well, without them. If then, the term *could not*, be at all admitted, (and how freely is this term applied to God in Scripture!) no such thing as unrestricted omnipotence exists. It is not that there is any limit in God. God forbid that I should dare to say so. It

is, that power in its own nature is limited. It can act only on possibilities. . . . . Even power itself is but a vague and unintelligible notion, unless displayed to us as triumphing over difficulties, and rising superior to obstacles. A sweeping omnipotence, which could by one sovereign act of will, decree that in the nature of things neither impediment nor resistance should exist, leaves no field even for power itself to act on. Omnipotence such as this, at least supplies no materials for man to comprehend or adore. No: we are constructed otherwise. Our faculties are so framed as to correspond with the truth and reality of things. The power that fills the soul with wonder and with praise is that which the Scripture of truth exhibits; that power in which God arises that his enemies may be scattered; that omnipotence by which he produces good out of evil, and subdues the most unyielding substances and stubborn elements into himself. But still more, as it respects the wisdom of God, is it necessary to dismiss the notion of an absolute omnipotence before the former attribute can shine forth in its true glory. For surely, according to our conceptions, it would be more wise to arrive at once, if that were possible, at all that means, and contrivances, and processes can accomplish, than to prefer elaborate and circuitous courses, merely for the sake of going round about to do what could be done as well in the twinkling of an eye. And yet in what does the divine wisdom as apprehensible by us consist? What are the views and discoveries which lead us, with the apostle, to exclaim, 'Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God?' Is it not in those very procedures which if unbounded power existed would be folly and not wisdom, that all the treasures of the infinite mind are manifested? in adapting means to ends, in pursuing the path of light amidst surrounding darkness, in harmonizing discordant principles, and bringing order out of confusion?"

After a few other remarks, the author proceeds to maintain

his position by the testimony of Scripture.—"To quote Scripture," he observes, "as fully as I might upon this subject, would be, in a measure, to transcribe the Bible. I shall content myself with producing three passages, which, though not of the directer kind, bear, I think, irresistibly on the point. The first is Ezek. xxxiii. 11. 'As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye, from all your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?' The second is Isa. v. 3, 4. 'And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes.' The last which I shall quote is Matt. xxiii. 37, 38. 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.'"

"Is this, then, I would ask any fair and candid person, who looks as if the All-gracious being who employs it, had any relief or remedy in reserve for those who wilfully reject the mercies he has freely offered them? Are these like the expressions of one who could bestow salvation in any other way, or any other terms? Do they not resemble rather the tender complaints and anxious warnings of a parent who had done all he could do, and proposed all that he had to propose, to rescue his child from ruin, and who must at last, with agonizing reluctance, give up that child, if he would still pursue those courses whose end is inevitable destruction? And if such be the characters in which God has been pleased to reveal himself; if such be the words which he has actually spoken, are we to be wise above what is written? Is it honouring God to say he uses a language to work upon our

feelings, which language is in reality a misrepresentation of the truth; a misrepresentation, nevertheless, so ill contrived, that, after all, it does not deceive us? Or is it exalting his great name, to magnify the mere natural attribute of his power, above those moral attributes in which consist at once his essence and his glory? No. If it be indeed reverence to God, to dismiss him altogether from our minds, then all such considerations are set at rest for ever. But if it be our duty, not only to think of him, but to bear him in all our thoughts, then in all around us we see this truth inscribed, that there is a limit in power or a limit in love. In which shall we place it?—In power? Then we place it not in God, but in his lowest attribute.—In love? Then indeed we place the limit in God himself—'God is love.'"*

The reasoning of this passage is most cogent, the dilemma is inevitable. If there be eternal sin and eternal perdition; if there be not ultimate and universal regeneration, limit there must be in love or in power: but holding as we do the doctrine of progressive discipline, we place limit in neither, and we glorify both. Strange it is, that while thus magnifying God in the highest of his attributes, in the harmony and perfection of his nature, while thus trusting him with the faith of children, notwithstanding many things in his providence mysterious and inexplicable, in despite of the sin and misery that surround us, filling the human mind and human destiny with painful and perplexing problems, we believe him to be all-powerful as he is all-good; yet in thus believing we are set down by Trinitarians as rebels against heaven, and blasphemers of our Creator. If reverence to God demand us to believe that the smoke of eternal torment from the depths of an unfathomable hell is an incense well pleasing in his sight, or an evil which he must endure but has no power to remove, then that is an honour we do

* Essays, &c., by the Rev. Henry Woodward: Essay xv. On the Nature of the Divine Omnipotence.

not and we cannot give: that is not the God we worship; that is not the God we can love: and if to believe in God be to think him such as Calvin and others have pictured him, then at once take not only the name of Christians from us, but in addition stigmatize us with that of atheists.

III. To limit the power of God in order to justify his love, is the struggle of a humane and benignant nature against a dark and stern theology; but writers in orthodox divinity, whom it would be too tedious to catalogue, have not scrupled to go the whole length along the line of fearful consequences to which their system led them. They have not hesitated to plead for the eternity of hell's torments *the glory of God*; strange idea indeed of the glory of God, to contemplate him as the author of everlasting pain and everlasting sin. We think that every attribute of God, in every manifestation, is directly against this doctrine. His omniscience is against it. He must have known from all eternity the destiny of the lost: and with this knowledge, on the orthodox theory, he made creatures with the direct foresight of their everlasting misery and everlasting destruction. His omnipotence is against it. I have shown by the long extract I have before quoted, that the profound and consistent theological reasoner who believes in eternal perdition cannot believe in a moral omnipotence. An all-powerful being must be either infinitely malignant or infinitely benevolent. If God were the one, he could find delight only in the suffering of his creatures; and he wills not to relieve them, because he does not will them to be happy. But this idea is utterly repugnant to the first principles of religion. If God be, as we believe he is, the other, he can have no motive to make his children, the work of his own hands, endlessly wretched; and having the power, he has also the will to redeem them. A progressive universe is, therefore, the only true solution to God's providence, and God's prescience. Divine justice, it is said, demands it. What, then, is divine justice? Is this divine justice identical

with vengeance? Is it divine justice, to make the everlasting torture of a race—for the saved are but the gleanings—a sacrifice to boundless self-glorification? Is it divine justice to array all the force of infinite attributes against a limited, a weak, and erring creature? Is it divine justice to meet the offence of ephemeral mortality with the agony of deathless torture and of resistless wrath? If this be *divine* justice, we have reason to rejoice that it is not *human* justice. Such justice is but naked malignity; and this view of it is the more firmly established when we further consider that, by the orthodox theology, all is the result of a foregone conclusion, the last term of a dark progression, the execution of a cause uttered in the black womb of eternity, for which the wretches are prepared by the inheritance of a corrupt nature in a corrupt world, and lest all natural causes should be insufficient, by an exposure to the unseen snares of a Satan profound in cunning, mighty in malice, and, by himself and his agents, all but omnipotent and omnipresent. This argument from divine justice is urged so frequently and earnestly, that I shall here transcribe a few remarks from a writer who has treated the subject with equal force of logic and fervour of eloquence. "Justice and goodness," he observes, "are the same. Justice requires no more punishment for sin than goodness: goodness requires the same as justice, but the manner in which benevolence manifests itself under the form of goodness and of justice is different, and, therefore, requires a different appellation. A person who forgives an offence upon repentance and reformation is good: this is one modification of goodness, which, by way of eminence, is often called goodness itself, or more strictly mercy: the person who visits an offence which is neither repented of, nor amended with a proper degree of pain, is also good: this is another modification of goodness to which the term justice is applied. Mercy and justice, therefore, do not differ from each other in their nature, since they equally arise from be-

nevolence, and they differ in aspect only according to the moral condition of the being with regard to whom they are exemplified. This account of divine justice explains, in the most satisfactory manner, the principle on which Deity rewards and punishes mankind. Did men never violate the laws of rectitude, he would make them invariably and completely happy. But there is no person who is free from fault: the moral state of every individual is, in some respect or at some period, such as it ought not to be. Every bad disposition, and every improper habit, must be rectified before happiness can be enjoyed. It is necessary, therefore, that the moral governor of the world should vary his conduct according to the character of the person whom he has to treat; that he should visit the good with favour, and manifest his disapprobation of the wicked; for, if he were to make happiness compatible with sin, it could not be corrected. The effect of pain is to make us dislike and avoid that which causes it. It is for this reason pain is annexed to sin. Sin is an evil which it is necessary to remove; pain is employed as the instrument of its destruction; and that principle by which Deity has established this constitution of things, by which he so regulates events as invariably to secure the ultimate reward of goodness, and the punishment of wickedness, is distinguished by the term justice. . . . . Were it necessary to add any thing more to show that divine justice is not inconsistent with the attribute of goodness, but a part of it, the consideration of the design of its inflictions would afford further evidence of this truth. Every violation of the law of God involves the transgressor, sooner or later, in suffering; and of this constitution of things, by which pain is inseparably connected with deviation from rectitude, the Supreme Being is the author. Why did he appoint it? Why did he so dispose the whole tendency of his moral government as to ensure this consequence? Why does he, who is a being of un-

erring wisdom and infinite benevolence, never suffer any offence which is unrepented of to escape punishment? Since his very nature is love, and since he created all his intelligent offspring in order to make them happy, it can be no gratification to him to involve them in suffering. Their groans can be no music to his ear. If he afflict them, it must be, not for his own gratification, but for their benefit. . . . . Viewing then the attribute of justice, which has been supposed to require the endless misery of the greater part of the human race, as that very principle which is designed to prevent this terrible consequence, (a man) feels himself capable of relying with implicit confidence on the decisions of the judge, both with regard to himself and all mankind. He is satisfied that he will treat even the most criminal with perfect equity; that he will place them in circumstances the best adapted to their unhappy condition; that his discipline will ultimately accomplish its end, and extirpate sin and misery from the creation." * If the doctrine of eternal torment be contradictory to God's justice, much more is it to his wisdom: for surely it is not wise to create only to destroy; —to perpetuate endless moral conflict—not only to destroy and confuse, but to destroy and confuse the best and noblest of his works—to inflict undying anguish on capacities suited for undying happiness, to ruin every faculty and to blast every hope. Nor is the doctrine less opposed to his holiness than to his wisdom. Improved ideas on the philosophy of our spiritual nature, and on the real purport of moral retribution, with the penalties of sin, imply the continuance of sin. A material hell or a material heaven by the thinking portion of all sects is in general exploded. Sin carries with it and creates its own punishments: if sin then be eternal and progressive in its sufferings, it must also be eternal and progressive in its existence and its evils. Hell is not merely a region of unutterable horror, where wretches writhe in eter-

* Illustrations of the Divine Government, by T. Southwood Smith.

nal torture, but also a region of boundless sin, of malignant wickedness, of hopeless corruption, of vilest affections, of basest passions. What shall we then say of an infinite holiness, enlightened by infinite wisdom, armed with infinite power, allowing this condition to exist? If the doctrine of eternal torment be true, no such attribute as divine mercy can have being: if this doctrine be true, a God of goodness is a fiction of imagination, the creation of a brain-sick enthusiasm, the dream of amiable but unfounded hopes. It is of no purpose to qualify in these things: there is no room in the same universe for a good God and an eternal hell: if this doctrine be true, the past is a wreck, and the future a curse. To such a condition of existence annihilation were a preferable alternative. It were better the brain should at once moulder with the thoughtless sod, than be tortured with the wilderings of everlasting contradictions; it were better the affections should perish with the last earthly sigh than throb through an eternity of agonized or selfish existence. On the orthodox supposition, either man must lose his identity and go to heaven without remembering whom he knew and loved in life, or he must lose his sympathy, become apostate to all his better feelings, and see without pain or pity many given over to despair with whom on earth he walked in dearest friendship. Instead of the big tear which would have burst from his eye in the years of mortality at the thought even of a partial separation; instead of the affectionate and instinctive anguish which would have torn his breast, as he saw the last vision in the sun, and the last flutter in the breeze of the sail which was wafting his friend to another clime; he must approve the sentence, nay, some maintain, he must see its execution with triumph, which may consign his nearest and dearest to endless damnation.—If the belief could be habitually and practically realized, that human souls were every minute over the wide earth dropping into sill, that amongst the sighs of death with which the world is

filled, the greater number are the knells of infinite perdition, that the graves on which the mourners weep, which to us all, at one time or other, make earth a vale of tears, are so many monuments of irreparable wreck, the silent witnesses of God's anger and man's despair; if any one, I repeat, could constantly, and in very truth, believe that souls were thus quitting the present scene, souls with enlarged capacities, but enlarged for eternal sorrow, and ever smile again, he might wear the form of his species, but he should have the heart of a fiend. Faith in such a doctrine should kill at once the life of joy; every sound should be funereal, brightness or beauty there should be none. Each of us, like Job, should curse the day of his birth, but with a more terrible earnestness; the exclamation of Jeremiah would be in every mouth an appropriate utterance, "Oh that my head were waters, and my eyes were fountains of tears!" Is there the human being that could feel joy in the midst of an hospital, could laugh in a city of the plague, while death went from couch to couch, while mirth was banished from each hearth, and the grass of desolation growing in the streets? But how much more should all delight be banished from the soul, if in the Creator's universe there be a dark and measureless region, filled with hideous abominations and unexpiring torments! If thus it be, let there, I repeat, be no look of happiness, let there be no voice of sweetness; let garment of praise be changed for the spirit of heaviness; let all heads be bent in grief, and all eyes dim with weeping, in lamentation for the sorrows of the universe. But be it not so—leave us at least a gleam of light from heaven.

> "Cease every joy to glimmer o'er my mind,
> But leave, oh! leave, the light of hope behind."

Oh no! God has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, no glory in the pain or punishment of his creatures: it is the progress towards universal blessedness, and its final consum-

mation, that truly shows forth the glory of God, and manifests the grandeur of his name and nature—more sweetly than the earth, more majestically than the heavens. It shows forth his justice: he punishes, terribly, it may be, but not cruelly or hopelessly; he punishes, but he amends; he chastises, but he purifies. It shows forth his wisdom: for universal holiness and universal happiness are the mightiest objects which infinite wisdom could select, the highest purposes in which infinite wisdom could be manifested: It shows forth his power, not in a blasting malediction, but in a creative and all-dispensing love; not in the thunder of destruction, but in the hand of a Father full of gifts and full of blessings:—subduing evil, distributing happiness, drawing out of apparent confusion order and harmony, more fair and beautiful than the worlds he has called out of darkness; "moving upon the face of many a stormy wave, and blending into calm what seemed only the chaos of contending elements."

It is marvellous that we can think seriously on existence or on providence, that we can reflect on human nature or survey human life, without feeling the need as well as the truth of the doctrine of the full mercy of God, and of his universally benignant designs for all his children. True, creation is fair, and much of existence is happy; but still there are evils and miseries which ever perplex us for solution. If the view of God's government which we receive, does not solve all the difficulties, at the very least it softens them; if there are inscrutable things in the providence of God which it cannot explain, there are atrocities ascribed by other systems to this character which it does not involve. We may mourn over the wrongs, sufferings, and sins, which exist with fatal abundance in our present state; we may wonder and think why they exist at all; but to what an extent of perplexity and pain are we driven, if we are to believe that all these evils are to be for ever, and to have no re-

medy. When I see those who bear want and sorrow through many and heavy years, I rejoice that there is at last a home and refuge for them in their father's kingdom where they who were poor shall be made rich; where those who mourned shall be comforted: when I hear the sigh of pain, when I behold the power of death; when I know, as all must, in how many human dwellings grief sits lonely on the hearth, I am saved from a fearful and dangerous distrust by the belief, that in times to come, and in regions which we know not of, there is a balm for every grief and a remedy for every sin. None are unaware of the physical and the moral evils that hang over and around this existence; and both from the felt experience of our own hearts, and the recorded experience of many others, we can judge the infinite complexity of moral struggle, the subtleties of sin, and the miserable consequences of evil doings; and we cannot think that a good, a holy, a just, and merciful God can ordain such a state to be perpetual and eternal. We know, moreover, how many are in the thick darkness of barbarism, each having within a universe of infinite and improvable capacities; we know what millions are in the dens of indigence, of crime, and ignorance, for whom earth is barren and life a burthen: and in what thought are we to take comfort, in what sentiment are we to find hope, if we believe not there is a God who does not forget his orphan children in their worst estate; that as here they have received their evil things, there is a heaven where they have their good? And when we observe in this life so much of antagonist passions; so much war and strife; so much of bitter and hopeless alienation, our tired spirits wish for a retreat of peace; and with the Psalmist we long for the wings of a dove that we might flee away and be at rest; for a calm sky after a heated atmosphere; for a union of heart and charity which no mistakes could again divide. We have no need to fear that our high aspirations for the future shall make us proud or presumptuous; for we have

all enough in our present lot to keep us humble. When we look within, we find a melancholy strife between our nobler and our higher existence, which we can never entirely overcome: when we cast our gaze over the face of the world, and the inequalities of life, and there in the strong-holds of sin and selfishness see so many causes of wickedness and pain, which the most believing and the most hoping can never hope entirely to overcome; when we regard our feeble powers and our short existence; our desires ever growing and wants ever deepening, and our passions ever craving; when we think of the knowledge we longed for, and could not have, the visions we dreamed of that never came, the good we resolved on and never did, the felicity we sought and never found, the wishes that were as empty as the echo in the desert, the ideas, the plans, the aspirations, and the purposes that vainly struggled for life, but found in our breasts their prison and their grave; we shall be in no danger of thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think.

Blessed and beautiful doctrine is this, of universal redemption and restoration, which pours such a radiance over our groping obscurity, which gives our troubled hearts such peace, which softens grief and glorifies affection, which corrects the perverse and dignifies the lowly, which nourishes whatever in our nature is great or god-like, renders religion transcendent and lovely, and opens before the rejoicing eye of faith the grandeur of a renovated and an emancipated universe.

CHRISTIANITY

WITHOUT PRIEST, AND WITHOUT RITUAL.

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN

PARADISE STREET CHAPEL.

ERRATA

To the TWELFTH LECTURE, *" The Christian View of Retribution hereafter."*

Page 9, line 2, *for* veins *read* reins.
— 14, last line, *for* part *read* past.
— 19, line 29, *for* our eternal life commences *read* our eternal life commences here.
— 28, line 29, *for* is *read* are.
— 34, line 12, *for* was a generous *read* as a general.
— 35, line 23, *after the word* salvation *read* it is objected.
— 42, line 9, *for* can *read* cannot.
— 47, line 12, *for* cause *read* curse.

COURSE OF LECTURES

BY THIRTEEN CLERGYMEN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

LIVERPOOL:
WILLMER AND SMITH, 32, CHURCH STREET.

LONDON:
JOHN GREEN, 121, NEWGATE STREET.

1839.

CHRISTIANITY

WITHOUT PRIEST, AND WITHOUT RITUAL.

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN

PARADISE STREET CHAPEL,

LIVERPOOL,

ON TUESDAY, MAY 14, 1839.

BY

REV. JAMES MARTINEAU.

BEING THE THIRTEENTH OF A SERIES, DELIVERED WEEKLY, IN ANSWER TO A COURSE OF LECTURES AGAINST UNITARIANISM, IN CHRIST CHURCH, LIVERPOOL, BY THIRTEEN CLERGYMEN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

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LECTURE XIII.

CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT PRIEST, AND WITHOUT RITUAL.

BY REV. JAMES MARTINEAU.

"TO WHOM COMING, AS UNTO A LIVING STONE, DISALLOWED INDEED OF MEN, BUT CHOSEN OF GOD, AND PRECIOUS; YE ALSO, AS LIVELY STONES, ARE BUILT UP A SPIRITUAL HOUSE, A HOLY PRIESTHOOD, TO OFFER UP SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES, ACCEPTABLE TO GOD BY JESUS CHRIST."—1 *Peter* ii. 4, 5.

THE formation of human society, and the institution of priesthood, must be referred to the same causes and the same date. The earliest communities of the world appear to have had their origin and their cement, not in any gregarious instinct, nor in mere social affections, much less in any prudential regard to the advantages of co-operation, but in a binding religious sentiment, submitting to the same guidance, and expressing itself in the same worship. As no tie can be more strong, so is none more primitive, than this agreement respecting what is holy and divine. In simple and patriarchal ages indeed, when the feelings of veneration had not been set aside by analysis into a little corner of the character, but spread themselves over the whole of life, and mixed it up with daily wonder, this bond comprised all the forces that can suppress the selfish and disorganizing passions, and compact a multitude of men together. It was not, as at present, to have simply the same *opinions* (things of quite modern growth, the brood of scepticism); but to have the same Fathers, the same Tradition, the same Speech, the same Land, the same Foes,

the same Priest, the same God. Nothing did man fear, or trust, or love, or desire, that did not belong, by some affinity, to his faith. Nor had he any book to keep the precious deposit for him; and if he had, he would never have thought of so frail a vehicle for so great a treasure. It was more natural to put it into structures hollowed in the fast mountain, or built of transplanted rocks which only a giant age could stir; and to tenant these with mighty hierarchies, who should guard their sanctity, and, by an undying memory, make their mysteries eternal. Hence, the first humanizer of men was their worship; the first leaders of nations, the sacerdotal caste; the first triumph of art, the colossal temple; the first effort to preserve an idea, produced a record of something sacred; and the first civilization was, as the last will be, the birth of religion.

The primitive aim of worship undoubtedly was, to act upon the sentiments of God; at first, by such natural and intelligible means, as produce favourable impressions on the mind of a fellow man;—by presents and persuasion, and whatever is expressive of grateful and reverential affections. Abel, the first shepherd, offered the produce of his flock; Cain, the first farmer, the fruits of his land; and while devotion was so simple in its modes, every one would be his own pontiff, and have his own altar. But soon, the parent would inevitably officiate for his family; the patriarch, for his tribe. With the natural forms dictated by present feelings, traditional methods would mingle their contributions from the past; postures and times, gestures and localities, once indifferent, would become consecrated by venerable habit; and so long as their origin was unforgotten, they would add to the significance, while they lessened the simplicity of worship. Custom, however, being the growth of time, tends to a tyrannous and bewildering complexity: forms, originally natural, then symbolical, end in being arbitrary; suggestive of nothing, except to the initiated; yet, if connected with

religion, so sanctified by the association, that it appears sacrilege to desist from their employment; and when their meaning is lost, they assume their place, not among empty gesticulations, but among the mystical signs by which earth communes with heaven. The vivid picture-writing of the early worship, filled with living attitudes, and sketched in the freshest colours of emotion, explained itself to every eye, and was open to every hand. To this succeeded a piety, which expressed itself in symbolical figures, veiling it utterly from strangers, but intelligible and impressive still to the soul of national tradition. This, however, passed again into a language of arbitrary characters, in which the herd of men saw sacredness without meaning; and the use of which must be consigned to a class separated for its study. Hence the origin of the priest and his profession; the conservator of a worship no longer natural, but legendary and mystical; skilful enactor of rites that spake with silent gesticulation to the heavens; interpreter of the wants of men into the divine language of the gods. Not till the powers above had ceased to hold familiar converse with the earth, and in their distance had become deaf and dumb to the common tongue of men, did the mediating priest arise;—needed then to conduct the finger-speech of ceremony, whereby the desire of the creature took shape before the eye of the Creator.

Observe then the true idea of PRIEST and RITUAL. The Priest is the representative of men before God; commissioned on behalf of human nature to intercede with the divine. He bears a message *upwards*, from earth to heaven; his people being below, his influence above. He takes the fears of the weak, and the cries of the perishing, and sets them with availing supplication before him that is able to help. He takes the sins and remorse of the guilty, and leaves them with expiating tribute at the feet of the averted Deity. He guards the avenues that lead from the mortal to the immortal, and without his interposition the creature is cut off from his

Creator. Without his mediation, no transaction between them can take place, and the spirit of a man must live as an outlaw from the world invisible and holy. There are means of propitiation which he alone has authority to employ; powers of persuasion conceded to no other; a mystic access to the springs of divine benignity, by outward rites which his manipulation must consecrate, or forms of speech which his lips must recommend. These ceremonies are the implements of his office, and the sources of his power; the magic by which he is thought to gain admission to the will above, and really wins rule over human counsels below. As they are supposed to change the relation of God to man, not by visible or natural operation, not (for example) by suggestion of new thoughts, and excitement of new dispositions in the worshipper, but by secret and mysterious agency, they are simply *spells* of a dignified order. Were we then to speak with severe exactitude, we should say, a Ritual is a system of consecrated charms; and the Priest, the great magician who dispenses them.

So long as any idea is retained, of mystically efficacious rites, consigned solely and authoritatively to certain hands, this definition cannot be escaped. The ceremonies may have rational instruction and natural worship appended to them; and these additional elements may give them a title to true respect. The order of men appointed to administer them, may have other offices and nobler duties to perform, rendering them, if faithful, worthy of a just and reverential attachment. But *in so far* as, by an exclusive and unnatural efficacy, they bring about a changed relation between God and man, the Ritual is an incantation, and the Priest is an enchanter.

To this sacerdotal devotion, there necessarily attach certain characteristic sentiments, both moral and religious, which give it a distinctive influence on human character, and adapt it to particular stages of civilization. It clearly severs

the worshippers by one remove from God. He is a Being, external to them, distant from them, personally unapproachable by them; their thought must *travel* to reach the Almighty; they must look afar for the Most Holy; they dwell themselves within the finite, and must ask a foreign introduction to the Infinite. He is not with them as a private guide, but in the remoter watch-towers of creation, as the public inspector of their life; not present for perpetual communion, but to be visited in absence by stated messages of form and prayer. And that God dwells in this cold and royal separation, induces the feeling, that man is too mean to touch him; that a consecrated intervention is required, in order to part Deity from the defiling contact of humanity. Why else am I restricted from unlimited personal access to my Creator, and driven to another in my transactions with him? And so, in this system, our nature appears in contrast, not in alliance, with the divine, and those views of it are favoured which make the opposition strong; its puny dimensions, its swift decadence, its poor self-flatteries, its degenerate virtues, its giant guilt, become familiar to the thought and lips; and life, cut off from sympathy with the godlike, falls towards the level of melancholy, or the sink of epicurism, or the abjectness of vicarious reliance on the priest. Worship, too, must have for its chief aim, to throw off the load of ill; to rid the mind of sin and shame, and the lot of hardship and sorrow; for principally to these disburthening offices do priests and rituals profess themselves adapted:—and who, indeed, could pour forth the privacy of love, and peace, and trust, through the cumbrousness of ceremonies, and the pompousness of a sacred officer? The piety of such a religion is thus a refuge for the weakness, not an outpouring of the strength of the soul: it takes away the incubus of darkness, without shedding the light of heaven; lifts off the nightmare horrors of earth and hell, without opening the vision of angels and of God. Nay, for the spiritual bonds which connect men with

the Father above, it substitutes material ties, a genealogy of sacred fires, a succession of hallowed buildings, or of priests having consecration by pedigree or by manual transmission; so that qualities belonging to the soul alone, are likened to forces mechanical or chemical; sanctity becomes a physical property: divine acceptance comes by bodily catenation; regeneration is degraded into a species of electric shock, which one only method of experiment, and the links of but one conductor, can convey. And, in fine, a priestly system ever abjures all aim at any higher perfection; boasts of being immutable and unimprovable; encourages no ambition, breathes no desire. It holds the appointed methods of influencing heaven, on which none may presume to innovate; and its functions are ever the same, to employ and preserve the ancient forms and legendary spells committed to its trust. Hence all its veneration is antiquarian, not sympathetic or prospective; it turns its back upon the living, and looks straight into departed ages, bowing the head and bending the knee; as if all objects of love and devotion were *there*, not here; in history, not in life; as if its God were dead, or otherwise imprisoned in the Past, and had bequeathed to its keeping such relics as might yield a perpetual benediction. Thus does the administration of religion, in proportion as it possesses a sacerdotal character, involve a distant Deity, a mean humanity, a servile worship, a physical sanctity, and a retrospective reverence.

Let no one, however, imagine, that there is no other idea or administration of religion than this; that the priest is the only person among men, to whom it is given to stand between heaven and earth. Even the Hebrew Scriptures introduce us to another class of quite different order; to whom, indeed, those Scriptures owe their own truth and power, and perpetuity of beauty; I mean the PROPHETS; whom we shall very imperfectly understand, if we suppose them mere historians, for whom God had turned time round the other way, so that

they spoke of things future as if past, and grew so dizzy in their use of tenses, as greatly to incommode learned grammarians; or if we treat their writings as scrap-books of Providence, with miscellaneous contributions from various parts of duration, sketches taken indifferently from any point of view within eternity, and put together at random and without mark, on adjacent pages, for theological memories to identify; first, a picture of an Assyrian battle, next, a holy family; now of the captives sitting by Euphrates, then, of Paul preaching to the Gentiles; here, a flight of devouring locusts, and there, the escape of the Christians from the destruction of Jerusalem; a portrait of Hezekiah, and a view of Calvary; a march through the desert, and John the Baptist by the Jordan; the day of Pentecost, and the French Revolution; Nebuchadnezzar and Mahomet; Caligula and the Pope,—following each other with picturesque neglect of every relation of time and place. No, the Prophet and his work always indeed belong to the future; but far otherwise than thus. Meanwhile, let us notice how, in Israel, as elsewhere, he takes his natural station above the priest. It was Moses the prophet who even *made* Aaron the priest. And who cares now for the sacerdotal books of the Old Testament, compared with the rest? Who, having the strains of David, would pore over Leviticus, or would weary himself with Chronicles, when he might catch the inspiration of Isaiah! It was no priest that wrote, "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt offering: the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."* It was no pontifical spirit that exclaimed, "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination to me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting: your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble

* Ps. li. 16, 17.

unto me; I am weary to bear them." "Wash you, make you clean."* Whatever, in these venerable scriptures, awes us by its grandeur, and pierces us by its truth, comes of the prophets, not the priests; and from that part of their writings too, in which they are not concerned with historical prediction, but with some utterance deeper and greater. I do not deny them this gift of occasional intellectual foresight of events. And doubtless it was an honour, to be permitted to speak thus to a portion of the future, and of local occurrences unrevealed to seers less privileged. But it is a glory far higher, to speak that which belongs to all time, and finds its interpretation in every place; to penetrate to the everlasting realities of things; to disclose, not when this or that man will appear, but how and wherefore all men appear and quickly disappear; to make it felt, not in what nook of duration such an incident will happen, but from what all-embracing eternity the images of history emerge and are swallowed up. In this highest faculty, the Hebrew seers belong to a class, scattered over every nation and every period; which Providence keeps ever extant for human good, and especially to furnish an administration of religion quite anti-sacerdotal. This class we must proceed to characterize.

The Prophet is the representative of God before men, commissioned from the Divine nature to sanctify the human. He bears a message *downwards*, from heaven to earth; his inspirer being above, his influence below. He takes of the holiness of God, enters with it into the souls of men, and heals therewith the wounds, and purifies the taint, of sin. He is charged with the peace of God, and gives from it rest to the weariness, and solace to the griefs of men. Instead of carrying the foulness of life to be cleansed in Heaven, he brings the purity of Heaven to make life divine. Instead of interposing himself and his mediation between humanity and Deity, he destroys the whole distance between them; and

* Is. i. 13, 14, 16.

only fulfils his mission, when he brings the finite mind and the infinite into immediate and thrilling contact, and leaves the creature consciously alone with the Creator. He is one to whom the primitive and everlasting relations between God and man have revealed themselves, stripped of every disguise, and bared of all that is conventional; who is possessed by their simplicity, mastered by their solemnity; who has found the secret of meeting the Holy Spirit within, rather than without; and knows, but cannot tell, how in the strife of genuine duty, or in moments of true meditation, the divine immensity and love have touched and filled his naked soul; and taught him by what fathomless Godhead he is folded round, and on what adamantine manhood he must take his stand. So far from separating others from the heavenly communion vouchsafed to himself, he necessarily believes that all may have the same godlike consciousness; burns to impart it to them; and by the vivid light of his own faith, speedily creates it in those who feel his influence; drawing out and freshening the faded colours of the divine image in their souls, till they too become visibly the seers and the sons of God. His instruments, like the objects of his mission, are human; not mysteries, and mummeries, and such arbitrary things, by which others may pretend to be talking with the skies; but the natural language which interprets itself at once to every genuine man, and goes direct to the living point of every heart. An earnest speech, a brave and holy life, truth of sympathy, severity of conscience, freshness and loftiness of faith,—these natural sanctities are his implements of power: and if heaven be pleased to add any other gifts, still are they weapons all,—not the mere tinsel of tradition and custom,—but forged in the inner workshop of our nature, where the fire glows beneath the breath of God, framing things of etherial temper. Thus armed, he lays undoubting siege to the world's conscience; tears down every outwork of pretence; forces its strongholds of delusion; humbles the vanities at its centre, and proclaims it the citadel of God. Th

true prophet of every age is no believer in the temple, but in the temple's Deity; trusts, not rites and institutions, but the heart and soul that fill or ought to fill them; if they speak the truth, no one so reveres them; if a lie, they meet with no contempt like his. He sees no indestructible sanctuary but the mind itself, wherein the Divine Spirit ever loves to dwell; and whence it will be sure to go forth and build such outward temple as may suit the season of Providence. He is conscious that there is no devotion like that which comes spontaneously from the secret places of our humanity, no orisons so true as those which rise from the common platform of our life. He desires only to throw himself in faith on the natural piety of the heart. Give him but that; and he will find for man an everlasting worship, and raise for God a cathedral worthy of his infinitude.

It is evident that one thoroughly possessed with this spirit could never be, and could never make, a priest: nor frame a ritual for priests already made. He is destitute of the ideas, out of which alone these things can be created. His mission is in the opposite direction: he interprets and reveals God to men, instead of interceding for men with God. In this office sacerdotal rites have no function and no place. I do not say that he must necessarily disapprove and abjure them, or deny that he may directly sanction them. If he does however, it is not in his capacity of prophet, but in conformity with feelings which his proper office has left untouched. His tendency will be against ceremonialism: and on his age and position will depend the extent to which this tendency takes effect. Usually, he will construct nothing ritual, will destroy much, and leave behind great and growing ideas, destructive of much more. But ere we quit our general conception of a prophet, let us notice some characteristic sentiments, moral and religious, which naturally connect themselves with his faith; comparing them with those which belong to the sacerdotal influence.

In this faith, God is separated by nothing from his wor-

shippers. He is not simply in contact with them, but truly in the interior of their nature: so that they may not only meet him in the outward providences of life, but bear his spirit with them, when they go to toil and conflict, and find it still, when they sit alone to think and pray. He is not the far observer, but the very present help, of the faithful will. No structure made with hands, nay, not even his own architecture of the heaven of heavens, contains and confines his presence: were there any dark recess whence these were hid, the blessed access would be without hindrance still; and the soul would discern him near as its own identity. No mean and ignoble conception can be entertained of a mind, which is thus the residence of Deity;—the shrine of the Infinite must have somewhat that is infinite itself. Thus, in this system, does our nature appear in alliance with the Divine, not in contrast with it; inspired with a portion of its holiness, and free to help forward the best issues of its Providence. Human life, blessed by this spirit, becomes a miniature of the work of the great Ruler: its responsibilities, its difficulties, its temptations, become dignified as the glorious theatre whereon we strive, by and with the good Spirit of God, for the mastery over evil. Worship, issuing from a nature and existence thus consecrated, is not the casting off of guilt and terror, but the glad unburthening of love, and trust, and aspiration, the simple speaking forth, as duty is the acting forth, of the divine within us; not the prostration of the slave, but the embrace of the child; not the plaint of the abject, but the anthem of the free. Is it not private, individual? And may it not by silence say what it will, and intimate the precise thing, and that only, which is at heart?—whence there grows insensibly that firm root of excellence, truth with one's own self. The priestly fancy of an hereditary or lineal sacredness can have no place here. The soul and God stand directly related, mind with mind, spirit with spirit: from our moral fidelity to this relation, from the jealousy with

which we guard it from insult or neglect, does the only sanctity arise; and herein there is none to help us, or give a vicarious consecration. And finally, the spirit of God's true prophet is earnestly prospective; more filled with the conception of what the Creator *will* make his world, than of what he *has* already made it: detecting great capacities, it glows with great hopes; knowing that God lives, and will live, it turns from the past, venerable as that may be, and reverences rather the promise of the present, and the glories of the future. It esteems nothing unimproveable, is replete with vast desires; and amid the shadows and across the wilds of existence chases, not vainly, a bright image of perfection. The golden age, which priests with their tradition put into the past, the prophet, with his faith and truth, transfers into the future: and while the former pines and muses, the latter toils and prays. Thus does the administration of religion, in proportion as it partakes of the prophetic or anti-sacerdotal character, involve the ideas of an interior Deity, a noble humanity, a loving worship, an individual holiness, and a prospective veneration.

We have found, then, two opposite views of religion; that of the Priest with his Ritual; and that of the Prophet with his Faith. I propose to show that the Church of England, in its doctrine of sacraments, coincides with the former of these, and sanctions all its objectionable sentiments: and that Christianity, in every relation, even with respect to its reputed rites, coincides with the latter.

The general conformity of the Church of England with the ritual conception of religion, will not be denied by her own members. Their denial will be limited to one point: they will protest that her formulas of doctrine do not ascribe a *charmed efficacy,* or any operation upon God, to the two sacraments. To avoid verbal disputes, let us consider what we are to understand by a spell or charm. The name, I apprehend, denotes any material object or outward act, the pos-

session or use of which is thought to confer safety or blessing, not by natural operation, but by occult virtues, inherent in it, or mystical effects appended to it. A mere commemorative sign, therefore, is not a charm, nor need there be any superstition in its employment: it simply stands for certain ideas and memories in our minds; re-excites and freshens them, not otherwise than speech audibly records them, except that it summons them before us by sight and touch, instead of sound. The effect, whatever it may be, is purely natural, by sequence of thought on thought, till the complexion of the mind is changed, and haply suffused with a noble glow. But in truth it is not fit to speak of commemorations, as things having efficacy at all; as desirable observances, under whose action we should put ourselves, in order to get up certain good dispositions in the heart. As soon as we see them acquiesced in, with this dutiful submission to a kind of spiritual operation, we may be sure they are already empty and dead. An *expedient* commemoration, deliberately maintained on utilitarian principles, for the sake of warming cold affections by artificial heat, is one of the foolish conceptions of this mechanical and sceptical age. It is quite true, that such influence is found to belong to rites of remembrance; but only so long as it is not privately looked into, or greedily contemplated by the staring eye of prudence, but simply and unconsciously received. No; commemorations must be the spontaneous fruit and outburst of a love already kindled in the soul, not the factitious contrivance for forcing it into existence. They are not the lighted match applied to the fuel on an altar cold: but the shapes in which the living flame aspires, or the fretted lights thrown by that central love on the dark temple-walls of this material life.

It is not pretended that the sacraments are mere commemorative rites. And nothing, I submit, remains, but that they should be pronounced charms. It is of little purpose

to urge, in denial of this, that the Church insists upon the necessity of faith on the part of the recipient, without which no benefit, but rather peril, will accrue. This only limits the use of the charm to a certain class, and establishes a pre-requisite to its proper efficacy. It simply conjoins the outward form with a certain state of mind, and gives to each of these a participation in the effect. If the faith be insufficient without the ceremony, then *some* efficacy is due to the rite: and this, being neither the natural operation of the material elements, nor a simple suggestion of ideas and feelings to the mind, but mystical and preternatural, is no other than a charmed efficacy.

Nor will the statement, that the effect is not upon God, but upon man, bear examination. It is very true, that the *ultimate* benefit of these rites is a result reputed to fall upon the worshipper;—regeneration, in the case of baptism; participation in the atonement, in the case of the Lord's Supper. But by what steps do these blessings descend? Not by those of visible or perceived causation; but through an express and extraordinary volition of God, induced by the ceremonial form, or taking occasion from it. The sacerdotal economy, therefore, is so arranged, that whenever the priest dispenses the water at the font, the Holy Spirit follows, as in instantaneous compliance with a suggestion: and whenever he spreads his hands over the elements at the communion, God immediately establishes a preternatural relation, not subsisting the moment before, between the substances on the table and the souls of the faithful communicants: so that every partaker receives, either directly or through supernatural increase of faith, some new share in the merits of the cross. Whatever subtleties of language then may be employed, it is evidently conceived that the first consequence of these forms takes place in heaven; and that on this depends whatever benediction they may bring: nor can a plain understanding frame any other idea of them than this; first,

they act upwards, and suggest something to the mind of God; who then sends down an influence on the mind of the believer. From this conception no figures of speech, no ingenious analogies, can deliver us. Do you call the sacraments "pledges of grace?" A pledge means a promise: and how a voluntary act of ours, or the priest's, can be a promise made to us by the Divine Being, it is not easy to understand. Do you call them "seals of God's covenant,"—the instrument by which he engages to make over its blessings to the Christian, like the signature and completion of a deed conveying an estate? It still perplexes us to think of a service of our own as an assurance received by us from Heaven. And one would imagine that the Divine promise, once given, were enough, without this incessant binding by periodical legalities. If it be said, "the renewal of the obligation is needful for us, and not for him;" then call the rites at once and simply, our service of self-dedication, the solemn memorial of our vows. And in spite of all metaphors, the question recurs; does the covenant stand without these seals, or are they essential *to give possession* of the privileges conveyed? Are they, by means preternatural, procurers of salvation? Have they a mystical action towards this end? If so, we return to the same point; they have a charmed efficacy on the human soul.

In order to establish this, nothing more is requisite than a brief reference to the language of the Articles and Liturgical services of the Church respecting Baptism and the Communion.

Baptism is regarded, throughout the Book of Common Prayer, as the instrument of regeneration: not simply as its sign, of which the actual descent of the Holy Spirit is independent; but as itself and essentially the means or indispensable occasion of the washing away of sin. That this is regarded as a mystical and magical, not a natural and spiritual effect, is evident from the alleged fact of its occurrence

in infants, to whom the rite can suggest nothing, and on whom, in the course of nature, it can leave no impression. Yet is it declared of the infant, after the use of the water, "Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that *this child is regenerate*," &c.: at the commencement of the service its aim is said to be that God may "grant to this child that thing which by nature he cannot have,"—"would wash him and sanctify him with the Holy Ghost," that he may be "delivered from God's wrath." Nothing, indeed, is so striking in this office of the national church, as its audacious trifling with solemn names, denoting qualities of the soul and will; the ascription of spiritual and moral attributes, not only to the child in whom they can yet have no development, but even to material substances; the frivolity with which engagements with God are made by deputy, and without the consent or even existence of the engaging will. Water is said to possess *sanctity*, for "the mystical washing away of sin." Infants, destitute of any idea of duty or obligation to be resisted or obeyed, are said to obtain "*remission of their sins*;" —to "renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world:" "steadfastly to believe" in the Apostles' creed, and to be desirous of "baptism into this faith." Belief, desire, resolve, are acts of some one's mind: the language of this service attributes them to the personality of the infant (*I* renounce, *I* believe, *I* desire); yet there they cannot possibly exist. If they are to be understood as affirmed by the godfathers and godmothers of themselves, the case is not improved: for how can one person's state of faith and conscience be made the condition of the regeneration of another? What intelligible meaning can be attached to these phrases of sanctity applied to an age not responsible? In what sense, and by what indication, are these children *holier* than others? And with what reason, if all this be Christianity, can we blame the Pope for sprinkling holy water on the horses? The service appears little better than a profane

sacerdotal jugglery, by which material things are impregnated with divine virtues, moral and spiritual qualities of the mind are sported with, the holy spirit of God is turned into a physical mystery, and the solemnity of personal responsibility is insulted.

That a superstitious value is attributed to the details of the baptismal form, in the Church of England, appears from certain parts of the service for the private ministration of the rite. If a child has been baptized by any other lawful minister than the minister of the parish, strict inquiries are to be instituted by the latter respecting the correctness with which the ceremony has been performed: and should the prescribed rules have been neglected, the baptism is invalid, and must be repeated. Yet great solicitude is manifested, lest danger should be incurred by an unnecessary repetition of the sacrament: to guard against which, the minister is to give the following conditional invitation to the Holy Spirit; saying, in his address to the child, "*If* thou art not already baptized, I baptize thee," &c. It is worthy of remark, that the Church mentions as one of the *essentials* of the service, the omission of which necessitates its repetition, the use of the formula, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." By this rule, every one of the apostolic baptisms recorded in Scripture must be pronounced invalid; and the Church of England, were it possible, would perform them again: for in no instance does it appear that the apostles employed either this or even any equivalent form of words.

That this sacrament is regarded as an indispensable channel of grace, and positively necessary to salvation, is clear from the provision of a short and private form, to be used in cases of extreme danger. The prayers, and faith, and obedience, and patient love, of parents and friends,—the dedication and heartfelt surrender of their child to God, the profound application of their anxieties and grief to their conscience and in-

ward life,—all this, we are told, will be of no avail, without the water and the priest. Archbishop Laud says, "That Baptism is necessary to the salvation of infants (in the ordinary way of the church, without binding God to the use and means of that sacrament, to which he hath bound us) is expressed in St. John iii. 'Except a man be born of water,' &c. So, no baptism, no entrance; nor can infants creep in, any other ordinary way."* Bishop Bramhall says, "Wilful neglect of baptism we acknowledge to be a damnable sin; and, without repentance and God's extraordinary mercy, to exclude a man from all hope of salvation. But yet, if such a person, before his death, shall repent and deplore his neglect of the means of grace, from his heart, and desire with all his soul to be baptized, but is debarred from it invincibly, we do not, we dare not, pass sentence of condemnation upon him; not yet the Roman Catholics themselves. The question then is, whether the want of baptism, upon invincible necessity, do evermore infallibly exclude from heaven."† Singular struggle here, between the merciless ritual of the priest, and the relenting spirit of the man!

The office of Communion contains even stronger marks of the same sacerdotal superstitions: and notwithstanding the Protestant horror entertained of the mass, approaches it so nearly, that no ingenuity can exhibit them in contrast. Near doctrines, however, like near neighbours, are known to quarrel most.

The idea of a physical sanctity, residing in solid and liquid substances, is encouraged by this service. The priest *consecrates* the elements, by laying his hand upon all the bread, and upon every flagon containing the wine about to be dispensed. If an additional quantity is required, this too must be consecrated before its distribution. And the sacredness

* Conference with Fisher, § 15; quoted in Tracts for the Times, No. 76. Catena Patrum, No. II. p. 18.

† Of Persons dying without Baptism, p. 979: quoted in *loc. cit.* pp. 19, 20.

thus imparted is represented as surviving the celebration of the Supper, and residing in the substances as a permanent quality: for in the disposal of the bread and wine that may remain at the close of the sacramental feast, a distinction is made between the consecrated and the unconsecrated portion of the elements; the former is not permitted to quit the altar, but is to be reverently consumed by the priest and the communicants; the latter is given to the curate. What the particular change may be, which the prayer and manipulation of the minister are thought to induce, it is by no means easy to determine; nor would the discovery, perhaps, reward our pains. It is certainly conceived, that they cease to be any longer mere bread and wine, and that with them thenceforth co-exist, really and substantially, the body and blood of Christ. Respecting this *Real Presence* with the elements, there is no dispute between the Romish and the English church; both unequivocally maintain it: and the only question is, respecting the *Real Absence* of the original and culinary bread and wine: the Roman Catholic believing that these substantially vanish, and are replaced by the body and blood of Christ; the English Protestant conceiving that they remain, but are united with the latter. The Lutheran, no less than the British Reformed church, has clung tenaciously to the doctrine of the real presence in the Eucharist. Luther himself declares, "I would rather retain with the Romanists, *only* the body and blood, than adopt, with the Swiss, the bread and wine, *without* the real body and blood of Christ." The catechism of our church affirms, that "the body and blood of Christ are *verily and indeed* taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper." And this was not intended to be figuratively understood, of the spiritual use and appropriation to which the faith and piety of the receiver would mentally convert the elements: for although here the body of Christ is only said to be "*taken*" (making it the *act of the communicant*), yet one of the Articles speaks of it as

"*given*" (making it the *act of the officiating priest*), and im plying the real presence *before participation*. Howev anxious indeed the clergy of the "Evangelical" school ma be to disguise the fact, it cannot be doubted that the church has always maintained a supernatural change in th elements themselves, as well as in the mind of the receive Cosin, Bishop of Durham, says, "We own the union be tween the body and blood of Christ, and the elements, whos use and office we hold to be changed from what it was be fore:" "we confess the necessity of a supernatural and hea venly change, and that the signs cannot become sacrament but by the infinite power of God." *

In consistency with this preparatory change, a charme efficacy is attributed to the subsequent participation in th elements. Even the *body* of the communicant is said to b under their influence: "Grant us to eat the flesh of thy dear Son, and drink his blood, that our sinful *bodies* may b made clean through his body, and our *souls* washed through his most precious blood:" and the unworthy recipients ar said "to provoke God to plague them with divers diseases and sundry kinds of death." Lest the worshipper, by pre- senting himself in an unqualified state, should "do nothing else than increase his damnation," the unquiet conscience is directed to resort to the priest, and receive the benefit of ab- solution before communicating. Can we deny to the Oxford divines the merit (whatever it may be) of consistency with the theology of their church, when they applaud and recom- mend, as they do, the administration of the eucharist to in- fants, and to persons dying and insensible? Indeed, it is difficult to discover, why infant Communion should be thought more irrational than infant Baptism. If, as I have endeavoured to show, the primary action of these ceremonies is conceived to be on God, not on the mind of their object,

* History of Popish Transubstantiation, ch. 4; printed in the Tracts for the Times, No. 27, pp. 14, 15.

why should not the Divine blessing be induced upon the young and the unconscious, as well as on the mature and capable soul? And were any further evidence required, than I have hitherto adduced, to show *on whom* the Communion is conceived to operate in the first instance, it would surely be afforded by this clause in the Service; by not partaking, "*Consider how great an injury ye do unto God!*"

The only thing wanted to complete this sacerdotal system, is to obtain for a certain class of men the corporate possession, and exclusive administration, of these essential and holy mysteries. This our Church accomplishes by its doctrine of Apostolical Succession; claiming for its ministers a lineal official descent from the Apostles, which invests them, and them alone within this realm, with divine authority to pronounce absolution or excommunication, and to administer the Sacraments. They are thus the sole guardians of the channels of the Divine Spirit and its grace, and interpose themselves between a nation and its God. "Receive the Holy Ghost," says the Service for Ordination of Priests, "for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained." "They only," says the present Bishop of Exeter, "can claim to rule over the Lord's household, whom he has himself placed over it; they only are able to minister the means of grace,—above all, to present the great commemorative *sacrifice*,—whom Christ has appointed, and whom he has in all generations appointed in unbroken succession from those, and through those, whom he first ordained. 'Ambassadors from Christ' must, by the very force of the term, receive credentials from Christ: 'stewards of the mysteries of God' must be entrusted with those mysteries by him. Remind your people, that in the Church only is the promise of forgiveness of sins; and though, to all who truly repent, and sincerely believe, Christ mercifully grants forgiveness; yet he has, in an especial mann

empowered his ministers to declare and pronounce to his people the absolution and remission of their sins: 'whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained.' This was the awful authority given to his first ministers, and in them, and through them, to all their successors. This is the awful authority we have received, and that we must never be ashamed nor afraid to tell the people that we have received.

"Having shown to the people your commission, show to them how our own Church has framed its services in accordance with that commission. Show this to them not only in the Ordinal, but also in the Collects, in the Communion Service, in the Office of the Visitation of the Sick; show it, especially, in that which continually presents itself to their notice, but is commonly little regarded by them; show it in the very commencement of Morning and Evening Prayer, and make them understand the full blessedness of that service, in which the Church thus calls on them to join. Let them see that there the minister authoritatively pronounces God's pardon and absolution to all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe Christ's holy gospel; that he does this, even as the Apostles did, with the authority and by the appointment of our Lord himself, who, in commissioning his Apostles, gave this to be the never-failing assurance of his co-operation in their ministry, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;' a promise which, of its very nature, was not to be fulfilled to the persons of those whom he addressed, but to their office, to their successors therefore in that office, 'even unto the end of the world.' Lastly, remind and warn them of the awful sanction with which our Lord accompanied his mission, even of the second order of the ministers whom he appointed; 'He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.'" That this high dignity may be clearly understood to belong in this country only to the Church of England, the Bishop proposes the question,

"What, then, becomes of those who are not, or continue not, members of that (visible) Church?" and replies to it by saying, that though he "judges not them that are without," yet "he who wilfully and in despite of due warning, or through recklessness and worldly-mindedness, sets at nought its ordinances, and despises its ministers, has no right to promise to himself any share in the grace which they are appointed to convey."* "Why," says one of the Oxford divines, who here undeniably speaks the genuine doctrine of his Church, "Why should we talk so much of an *Establishment*, and so little of an APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION? Why should we not seriously endeavour to impress our people with this plain truth, that by separating themselves from our communion, they separate themselves not only from a decent, orderly, useful society, but from THE ONLY CHURCH IN THIS REALM WHICH HAS A RIGHT TO BE QUITE SURE THAT SHE HAS THE LORD'S BODY TO GIVE TO HIS PEOPLE?"†

Of course this Divine authority has been received through the Church of Rome, so abominable in the eyes of all Evangelical clergymen; and through many an unworthy link in the unbroken chain. The Holy Spirit, it is acknowledged, has *passed through* many, on whom, apparently, it was not pleased to *rest;* and the right to forgive sins been conferred by those who seemed themselves to need forgiveness. A writer in the Oxford Tracts observes, "Nor even though we may admit that many of those who formed the connecting links of this holy chain were themselves unworthy of the high charge reposed in them, can this furnish us with any solid ground for doubting or denying their power to exercise that legitimate authority with which they were duly invested, of transmitting the sacred gift to worthier followers." ‡

* Bishop of Exeter's charge, delivered at his Triennial Visitation in August, September, and October, 1836, p. 44—47.

† Tracts for the Times, No. 4, p. 5.

‡ Ibid. No. 5, pp. 9, 10.

In its doctrine of Sacraments, then, and in that of Ecclesiastical authority and succession, the Church of England is thoroughly imbued with the sacerdotal character. It doubtless contains far better elements and nobler conceptions than those which it has been my duty to exhibit now; and solemnly insists on faith of heart, and truth of conscience, and Christian devotedness of life, as well as on the observance of its ritual; with the external it unites the internal condition of sanctification. But insisting on the theory of a mystic efficacy in the Christian rites, it necessarily fails to reconcile these with each other: and hence the opposite parties within its pale; the one magnifying faith and personal spirituality, the other exalting the sacraments and ecclesiastical communion. They represent respectively the two constituent and clashing powers, which met at the formation of the English Church, and of which it effected the mere compromise, not the reconciliation; I mean, the priestliness of Rome, and the prophetic spirit of the Reformers. Never, since apostolic days, did heaven bless us with truer prophet than Martin Luther. It was his mission (no modern man had ever greater,) to substitute the idea of *personal faith* for that of *sacerdotal reliance*. And gloriously, with bravery and truth of soul amid a thousand hindrances, did he achieve it. But though, ever since, the priests have been down, and faith has been up, yet did the hierarchy unavoidably remain, and insisted that *something* should be made of it, and at least some colourable terms proposed. Hence, every reformed Church exhibits a coalition between the new and the old ideas: and combined views of religion, which must ultimately prove incompatible with each other; the formal with the spiritual; the idea of worship as a means of propitiating God, with the conception of it as an expression of love in man; the notion of Church authority with that of individual freedom; the admission of a licence to think, with a prohibition of thinking wrong. In our national Church, the old spirit was ascendant over the new,

though long forced into quiescence by the temper of modern times. Now it is attempting to re-assert its power, not without strenuous resistance. Indeed, the present age seems destined to end the compromise between the two principles, from the union of which Protestantism assumed its established forms. The truce seems everywhere breaking up: a general disintegration of churches is visible; tradition is ransacking the past for claims and dignities, and canvassing present timidity for fresh authority, to withstand the wild forces born at the Reformation, and hurrying us fast into an unknown future.

Let us now turn to the primitive Christianity; which, I submit, is throughout wholly anti-sacerdotal.

Surely it must be admitted that the general spirit of our Lord's personal life and ministry was that of the Prophet, not of the Priest; tending directly to the disparagement of whatever priesthood existed in his country, without visibly preparing the substitution of anything at all analogous to it. The sacerdotal order felt it so; and with the infallible instinct of self-preservation, they watched, they hated, they seized, they murdered him. The priest in every age has a natural antipathy to the prophet, dreads him as kings dread revolution, and is the first to detect his existence. The solemn moment and the gracious words, of Christ's first preaching in Nazareth, struck with fate the temple in Jerusalem. To the old men of the village, to the neighbours who knew his childhood, and companions who had shared its rambles and its sports, he said, with the quiet flush of inspiration; "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor: he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."* The

* Luke iv. 18, 19.

Spirit of the Lord in Galilee! speaking with the peasantry, dwelling in villages, and wandering loose and where it listeth among the hills! This would never do, thought the white-robed Levites of the Holy City; it would be as a train of wild-fire in the Temple. And were they not right? When it was revealed that sanctity is no thing of place and time, that a way is open from earth to heaven, from every field or mountain trod by human feet, and through every roof that shelters a human head; that amid the crowd and crush of life, each soul is in personal solitude with God, and by speech or silence (be they but true and loving) may tell its cares and find its peace; that a divine allegiance might *cost nothing*, but the strife of a dutiful will and the patience of a filial heart; how could any priesthood hope to stand? See how Jesus himself, when the Temple was close at hand, and the sunshine dressed it in its splendour, yet withdrew his prayers to the midnight of Mount Olivet. He entered those courts to teach, rather than to worship; and when there, he is felt to take no consecration, but to give it; to bring with him the living spirit of God, and spread it throughout all the place. When evening closes his teachings, and he returns late over the Mount to Bethany, did he not feel that there was more of God in the night-breeze on his brow, and the heaven above him, and the sad love within him, than in the place called "Holy" which he had left? And when he had knocked at the gate of Lazarus the risen and become his guest; when, after the labours of the day, he unburthened his spirit to the affections of that family, and spake of things divine to the sisters listening at his feet; did they not feel, as they retired at length, that the whole house was full of God, and that there is no sanctuary like the shrine, not made with hands, within us all? In childhood, he had once preferred the temple and its teachings to his parents' home: now, to his deeper experience, the temple has lost its truth; while the cottage and the walks of Nazareth, the daily voices and constant duties of this life,

seem covered with the purest consecration. True, he vindicated the sanctity of the temple, when he heard within its enclosure the hum of traffic and the chink of gain, and would not have the house of prayer turned into a place of merchandise: because in this there was imposture and a lie, and Mammon and the Lord must ever dwell apart. In nothing must there be mockery and falsehood; and while the temple stands, it must be a temple true.

Our Lord's whole ministry then (to which we may add that of his apostles) was conceived in a spirit quite opposite to that of priesthood. A missionary life, without fixed locality, without form, without rites; with teaching free, occasional and various, with sympathies ever with the people, and a strain of speech never marked by invective, except against the ruling sacerdotal influence;—all these characters proclaim him, purely and emphatically, the Prophet of the Lord. It deserves notice that, unless as the name of his enemies, the *word* "PRIEST" (ἱερεὺς) never occurs in either the historical or epistolary writings of the New Testament, except in the Epistle to the Hebrews. And *there* its application is not a little remarkable. It is applied to Christ alone: it is declared to belong to him, only after his ascension: it is said that, while on earth, he neither was, nor could be, a priest: and if it is admitted that he holds the office in heaven, this is only to satisfy the demand of the Hebrew Christians for some sacerdotal ideas in their religion, and to reconcile them to having no priest on earth. The writer acknowledges one great pontiff in the world above, that the whole race may be superseded in the world below; and banishes priesthood into invisibility, that men may never see its shadow more. All the terms of office which are given to the first preachers of the gospel and superintendents of churches—as Deacon, Elder or Presbyter, Overseer or Bishop, are *Lay-terms*, belonging previously, not to ecclesiastical, but to civil life; an indication, surely, that no analogy was thought to exist between the

Apostolic and the Sacerdotal relations.* I shall, no doubt, be reminded of the words, in which our Lord is supposed to have given their commission to his first representatives; "Whatsoever ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven;"† and shall be asked whether this does not convey to them and their successors an official authority to forgive sins, and dispense the decrees of the unseen world. I reply briefly:

1st, That the power here granted does not relate to the dispensations of the future life, but solely to what would be termed, in modern language, the allotment of *church-membership*. The previous verse proves this, furnishing as it does a particular case of the general authority here assigned. It directs the apostles under what circumstances they are to remove an offender from a Christian society, and treat him as an unconverted man, as a heathen man and a publican. Having given them their rule, he freely trusts the application of it to them: and being about to retire ere long, from personal intervention in the affairs of his kingdom, he assures them that their decisions shall be his, and that he may be considered as adopting in heaven their determinations upon earth. He simply "consigns to his apostles discretionary power to direct the affairs of his church, and superintend the diffusion of the glad tidings: they may bind and loose, that is, open and shut the door of admission to their community,

* Archbishop Whately, speaking of the word *ἱερεὺς* and its meaning, says; "This is an office assigned to none under the gospel-scheme, except the ONE great High Priest, of whom the Jewish Priests were types."[1] Of the "*gospel-scheme*," this is quite true; of the *Church-of-England scheme*, it is not. There lies before me Duport's Greek version of the Prayer-Book and Offices of the Anglican Church: and turning to the Communion Service, I find the officiating clergyman called *ἱερεὺς* throughout. The *absence* of this word from the records of the primitive Gospel, and its *presence* in the Prayer-Book, is perfectly expressive of the difference in the spirit of the two systems;—the difference between the Church *with*, and the "Christianity *without* Priest."

† Matt. xviii. 18.

[1] Elements of Logic. Appendix: Note on the word "Priest."

as their judgment may determine; employing or rejecting applicants for the missionary office; dissociating from their assemblies obstinate delinquents; receiving with openness, or dismissing with suspicion, each candidate for instruction, according to their estimate of his qualifications and motives."

2ndly, It is to be observed, that there is no appearance of any one being in the contemplation of our Lord, beyond the persons immediately addressed. Not a word is said of any official successor or any distant age. No indication is afforded, that any idea of futurity was present to the mind of Jesus: and a title of perpetual office, an instrument creating and endowing an endless priesthood, ought, it will be admitted, to be somewhat more explicit than this. But where the power has been successfully claimed, the title is seldom difficult to prove.

The alleged RITUAL of Christianity, consisting of the sacraments of Baptism and the Communion, will be found no less destitute of sanction from the Scriptures. The former we shall see reason to regard as simply an initiatory form, applicable only to Christian converts, and limited therefore to adults; the latter as purely a commemoration: neither therefore having any sacramental or mystical efficacy.

For baptism it is impossible to establish any supernatural origin. It is admitted to have existed before the Christian æra; and to have been employed by the Jews on the admission of proselytes to their religion. It is certain that it is not an enjoined rite in the Mosaic dispensation; and though prevalent before the period of the New Testament, is nowhere enforced or recognised in the writings of the Old. It arose therefore in the interval between the only two systems which Christians acknowledged to be supernatural: and must be considered as of natural and human origin, invested, thus far, with no higher authority than its own appropriateness may confer. There seem to have been two modes of construing the symbol: the one founded on the cleansing effect of the water on the person of the baptized himself; the other, on

the appearance of his immersion (which was complete) to the eye of a spectator. The former was an image of the Heathen convert's purification from a foul idolatry; and his transition to a stainless condition under a divine and justifying law. The latter represented him, when he vanished in the stream, as interred to this world, sunk utterly from its sight; and when he re-appeared, as emerging or born again to a better state; the "old man" was "buried in baptism," and when he "rose again," he had altogether "become new."* The ceremony then was appropriately used in any case of transition from a depressed and corrupt state of existence to a hopeful and blessed one; from a false or imperfect religion to one true and heavenly.

But it will be said, whatever the origin of Baptism, it was employed and sanctioned by our Lord, who commissioned his apostles to go and baptize all nations. True; but is there no difference between the adoption of a practice already extant,—of a practice which was as much the mere institutional dress of the apostles' nation, as the sandals whose dust they were to shake off against the faithless, were the customary clothing of the apostles' feet,—and the authoritative appointment of a Sacrament? They were going forth to make converts: and why should they not have recourse to the form familiarly associated with the act? Familiar association recommended its adoption in that age and clime; and the absence of such association elsewhere and in other times may be thought to justify its disuse. At all events, a ceremony

* See Rom. vi. 2—4. "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Mr. Locke observes of "St. Paul's argument," that it "is to show into what state of life we ought to be raised out of baptism, in similitude and conformity to that state of life Christ was raised into from the grave." See also Col. ii. 12. "Ye are . . buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." The force of the image clearly depends on the sinking and rising in the water.

thus taken up must be presumed to retain its acquired sense and its established extent of application: and if so, baptism must be strictly limited to the admission of proselytes from other faiths. This accords with the known practice of the apostles, who cannot be shown to have baptized any but those whom they had personally, or by their missionaries, persuaded to become Christians. Not a single case of the use of the rite with children can be adduced from Scripture: and the only argument by which such employment of it is ever justified is this; that a *household* is said to have been baptized, and *all nations* were to receive the offer of it; and that the household *may*, the nations *must*, have contained children. It is evident that such reasoning could never have been propounded, unless the practice had existed first, and the defence had been found afterwards.

With the system of infant baptism, vanish almost all the ideas which the prevalent theology has put into the rite; and it becomes as intelligible and expressive to one who believes in the good capacities of human nature, as to those who esteem it originally depraved. 'How unmeaning,' say our orthodox opponents, 'is this ceremony in Unitarian hands; denying, as they do, the doctrines which it represents! of what regeneration can they possibly suppose it the symbol, if not of the washing away of that *hereditary sin*, which they refuse to acknowledge? for when the infant is brought to the font, he can as yet have no other guilt than this.' I reply; the objection has no force except against the use of *infant* baptism in our churches,—which I am not anxious to defend: but of course those Unitarians who employ it, conceive it to be the token, not of any sentiments which they reject, but of truths and feelings which they hold dear. For myself, I believe, with our opponents, that the *doctrine* of original sin and the *practice* of infant baptism *do* belong to each other, and must stand or fall together: and therefore deem it a fact very significant of the apostles' theology, that no infant can

be shown ever to have been "brought to the font" by these first true missionaries of Christianity. And as to the *new-birth* which baptism (i. e. recent and genuine discipleship to Jesus) may give to the *maturely-convinced* Christian, he must have a great deal to learn, not only of the Hebrew conceptions and language in relation to the Messiah, but of the spirituality of the gospel, and of the fresh creations of character which it calls up, who can be much puzzled about its meaning.

In Christian baptism, then, we have no sacrament with mystic power; but an initiatory form, possibly of consuetudinary obligation only; but if enjoined, applicable exclusively to proselytes, and misemployed in the case of infants; a sign of conversion, not a means of salvation; confided to no sacerdotal order, but open to every man fitted to give it an appropriate use.

I turn to the Lord's Supper; with design to show, what it is not, and what it is. It is not a mystery, or a sacrament, any more than it is an expiatory sacrifice. To persuade us that it has a ritual character, we are first assured that it is clearly the successor in the Gospel to the Passover under the Law. Well,—even if it were so, it would still be simply commemorative, and without any other efficacy than a festival, filled with great remembrances, and inspired with religious joy. Such was the Paschal Feast in Jerusalem;—the annual gathering of families and kindred, a sacred carnival under the spring sky and in sight of unreaped fields, when the memory was recalled of national deliverance, and the tale was told of traditional glories, and the thoughts brought back of bondage reversed, of the desert pilgrimage ended, of the promised land possessed. The Jewish festival was no more than this; unless, with Archbishop Magee and others, we erroneously conceive it to be a proper sacrifice.* So that those who would interpret the Lord's Supper by the Pass-

* See Note.

over have their choice between two views: that it is a simple commemoration; or that it is an expiatory sacrifice: in the former case, they quit the Church of England; in the latter, they fall into the Church of Rome.

But, in truth, there is no propriety in applying the name 'Christian passover' to the Communion. The notion rests entirely on this circumstance; that the first three Evangelists describe the last Supper as the Paschal Supper. But the *institutional* part of that meal was over before the cup was distributed, and the repetition of the act enjoined. Nor is there the slightest trace, either in the subsequent scriptures, or in the earliest history of the Church, that the Communion was thought to bear relation to the passover. The time, the frequency, the mode, of the two were altogether different. Indeed, when we observe that not one of these particulars is prescribed and determined by our Lord at all, when we notice the slight and transient manner in which he drops his wish that they would "do this in remembrance of" him, when we compare these features of the account with the elaborate precision of Moses respecting hours, and materials, and dates, and places, and modes in the establishment of the Hebrew festivals, it is scarcely possible to avoid the impression, that we are reading narrative, not law; an utterance of personal affection, rather than the legislative enactment of an everlasting institution.* However this may be, no importance can be attached to the reported coincidence in the time of that meal with the day of passover: for the apostle John, who gives by far the fullest account of what happened at that table (yet never mentions the institution of the supper), states that this was not the paschal meal at all, which did not occur, he says, till the following day of crucifixion.†

* Compare Matt. xxvi. 26—28; Mark xiv. 22—24; Luke xxii. 19, 20, with Exod. xii. 3—11, 14, 24—27, 43—49; Lev. xxiii. 5; Num. ix. 10—14; xxviii. 16; Deut. xvi. 1, 4—7.

† Compare Matt. xxvi. 17—21; Mark xiv. 12—17; Luke xxii. 7—17, with John xiii. 1, seqq.; xviii. 28; xix. 14, 31, 42. See also 2nd Lecture, pp. 38, 39.

'But,' it will be said, 'the gospels are not the only parts of Scripture, whence the nature of the eucharist may be learned. Language is employed by St. Paul in reference to it, which cannot be understood of a mere memorial, and implies that awful consequences hung on the worthy or unworthy participation in the rite. Does he not even say, that a man may "eat and drink damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body?"'

The passage whence these words are cited certainly throws great light on the institution of which we treat: but there must be a total disregard to the whole context and the general course of the apostle's reasoning before it can be made to yield any argument for the mystical character of the rite.* It would appear that the Corinthian church was in the habit of celebrating the Lord's Supper in a way which, even if it had never been disgraced by any indecorum, must have struck a modern Christian with wonder at its singularity. The members met together in one room or church, each bringing his own supper, of such quantity and quality as his opulence or poverty might allow. To this the apostle does not object, but apparently considers it a part of the established arrangement. But these Christians were divided into factions, and had not learned the true uniting spirit of their faith: nor do they seem to have acquired that sobriety of habit and sanctity of mind, which their profession ought to have induced. When they entered the place of meeting, they broke up into groups and parties, class apart from class, and rich deserting poor: each set began its separate meal, some indulging in luxury and excess, others with scarce the means of keeping the commemoration at all; and, infamous to tell, the blessed supper of the Lord was sunk into a tavern meal. So gross and habitual had the abuse become, that the excesses had affected the health and life of these guilty and unworthy par-

* See 1 Cor. xi. 17—34.

takers. They had made no distinction between the Communion and an ordinary repast, had lost all perception of the memorial significance of their meeting, had not discriminated or "discerned the Lord's body:" and so they had eaten and drunk judgment (improperly rendered "*damnation*" in the English Version) to themselves; and many were weak and sickly among them, and many even slept. Well would it be, if they would look on this as a chastening of the Lord: in which case they might take warning, and escape being cast out of the church, and driven to take their chance with the unbelieving and heathen world. "When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."

In order to remedy all this corruption, St. Paul reminds them, that to eat and drink under the same roof, in the church, does not constitute proper Communion: that, to this end, they must not break up into sections, and retain their property in the food, but all participate seriously together. He directs that an absolute separation shall be made between the occasions for satisfying hunger and thirst, and those for observing this commemorative rite, discriminating carefully the memorial of the Lord's body from every thing else. He refers them all to the original model of the institution, the parting meal of Christ, before his betrayal; and by this example, as a criterion, he would have every man examine himself, and after that pattern eat of the bread and drink of the cup. Hence it appears,

That the unworthy partaker was the riotous Corinthian, who made no distinction between the sacred Communion and a vulgar meal:

That the judgment or damnation which such brought on themselves, was sickliness, weakness, and premature but natural death:

That the self-examination which the apostle recommends

to the communicant is, a comparison of his mode of keeping the rite, with the original model of the Last Supper:

That in the Corinthian Church there was no Priest, or officiating dispenser of the elements: and that St. Paul did not contemplate or recommend the appointment of any such person.

The Lord's Supper, then, I conclude, was and is a simple commemoration. Am I asked, '*of what*? Why, according to Unitarian views, the death on the cross merits the memorial, more than the remaining features of our Lord's history,—more even than the death of many a noble martyr, who has sealed his testimony to truth by like self-sacrifice?' The answer will be found at length in the Lecture on the Atonement, where the Scriptural conceptions of Christ's death are expounded in detail. Meanwhile, it is sufficient to recal an idea, which has more than once been thrown out during this course: that if Jesus had taken up his Messianic power without death, he would have remained a Hebrew, and been limited to the people amid whom he was born. He quitted his mortal personality, he left this fleshly tabernacle of existence, and became immortal, that his nationality might be destroyed, and all men drawn in as subjects of his reign. It was the cross that opened to the nations the blessed ways of life, and put us all in relations not of law, but of love, to him and God. Hence the memorial of his death celebrates the universality and spirituality of the gospel; declares the brotherhood of men, the fatherhood of providence, the personal affinity of every soul with God. That is no empty rite, which overflows with these conceptions.

Christianity, then, I maintain, is without Priest, and without Ritual. It altogether coalesces with the prophetic idea of religion, and repudiates the sacerdotal. Christ himself was transcendently THE PROPHET. He brought down God

to this our life, and left his spirit amid its scenes. The Apostles were prophets; they carried that spirit abroad, revealing everywhere to men the sanctity of their nature, and the proximity of their heaven. Nor am I even unwilling to admit an Apostolic succession, never yet extinct, and never more to be extinguished. But then it is by no means a rectilinear regiment of incessant priests; but a broken, scattered, yet glorious race of prophets; the genealogy of great and Christian souls, through whom the primitive conceptions of Jesus have propagated themselves from age to age; mind producing mind, courage giving birth to courage, truth developing truth, and love ever nurturing love, so long as one good and noble spirit shall act upon another. Luther surely was the child of Paul: and what a noble offspring has risen to manhood from Luther's soul; whom to enumerate, were to tell the best triumphs of the modern world. These are Christ's true ambassadors; and never did he mean any follower of his to be called a priest. He has his genuine messenger, wherever, in the Church or in the world, there toils any one of the real prophets of our race; any one who can create the good and great in other souls, whether by truth of word or deed, by the inspiration of genuine speech, or the better power of a life merciful and holy.

And here, my friends, with my subject might my Lecture close; were it not that we are assembled now to terminate this controversy: and that a few remarks in reference to its whole course and spirit seem to be required.

That the recent aggression upon the principles of Unitarian Christianity, was prompted by no unworthy motive, individual or political, but by a zeal, Christian so far as its spirit is disinterested, and unchristian only so far as it is exclusive, has never been doubted or denied by my brother ministers or myself. That much personal consideration and courtesy have been evinced towards us during the controversy,

it is so grateful to us to acknowledge, that we must only regret the theological obstructions in the way of that mutual knowledge, which softens the prejudices, and corrects the errors of the closet. From such errors, the lot of our fallible nature, we are deeply aware that we cannot be exempt, and profoundly wish that, by others' aid or by our own, we could discover them. Meanwhile, we do not feel that our opponents have been successful in the offer which they have made, of help towards this end. They are too little acquainted with our history and character, and have far too great a horror of us, to succeed in a design, demanding rather the benevolence of sympathy and trust, than that of antipathy and fear. Hence have arisen certain complaints and charges against our system and its tendencies, which, having been reiterated again and again in the Christ Church Lectures, and scarcely noticed in our own, claim a concluding observation or two now.

1. We are said to be infidels in disguise, and our system to be drifting fast towards utter unbelief. At all events, it is said we make great advances that way.

It is by no means unusual to dismiss this charge on a whirlwind of declamation, designed to send it and the infidel to the greatest possible distance. My friend who delivered the first Lecture, noticed it in a far different spirit; and in a discussion where truth and wisdom had any chance, his reply would have prevented any recurrence to the statement. Let me try to imitate him in the testimony which I desire to add upon this point.

Every one, I presume, who disbelieves *any thing*, is, with respect to that thing, *an infidel*. Departure from any prevalent and established ideas, is inevitably an approach to infidelity; the extent of the departure, not the reasonableness or propriety of it, is the sole measure of the nearness of that approach; which, however wise and sober, when estimated by a true and independent criterion, will appear, to persons

strongly possessed by the ascendant notions, nothing less than alarming, amazing, awful. In short, the average popular creed of the day, is the mental standard, from which the stadia are measured off towards that invisible, remote, nay, even imaginary place, lodged somewhere within chaos, called utter unbelief. Christianity at first was blank infidelity: and disciples, being of course the atheists of their day, were thought a fit prey for the wild beasts of the amphitheatre. Every rejection of tradition, again, is unbelief with respect to it; and to those who hold its authority, it is the denial of an essential. It is too evident to need proof, that the average popular belief cannot be assumed, by any considerate person, as a standard of truth. To make it an objection against any class of men, that they depart from it, is to prove no error against them; and no one, who is not willing to call in the passions of the multitude in suffrage on the controversies of the few, will condescend to enforce the charge.

But only observe how, in the present instance, the matter stands. In the popular religion we discern, mixed up together, two constituent portions; certain *peculiar* doctrines which characterize the common orthodoxy; and certain *universal* Christian truths remaining, when these are subtracted. The infidel throws away both of these; we throw away the former only: and thus far, no doubt, we partially agree with him. But *on what grounds* do we severally justify this rejection? In answer to this question, compare the views, with respect both to the *authority* and to the *interpretation* of Scripture, held by the three parties, the Trinitarian, the Unbeliever, the Unitarian. The Unbeliever does not usually find fault with the orthodox *interpretation* of the Bible, but allows it to pass, as probably the real meaning of the book, only he altogether denies the divine character and authority of the whole religion; he therefore *agrees* with the Trinitarian respecting interpretation, disagrees with him respecting *authority*. The Unitarian, again, admits the divine character

of Christianity, but understands it differently from the Trinitarian; he therefore reverses the former case, *agrees* with the orthodox on the authority, *disagrees* respecting interpretation. It follows, that with the unbeliever he agrees *in neither*, and is therefore further from him than his Trinitarian accuser.

I have given this explanation, from regard simply to logical truth. I have no desire to join in the outcry against even the deliberate unbeliever in the Gospel, as if he must necessarily be a fiend. Profoundly loving and trusting Christianity myself, I yet feel indignant at the persecution which theology, policy, and law inflict on the many who, with undeniable exercise of conscientiousness and patience of research, are yet unable to satisfy themselves respecting its evidence. The very word '*infidel*,' implying not simply an intellectual judgment, but bad moral qualities, conveys an unmerited insult, and ought to be repudiated by every generous disputant. The more deeply we trust Christianity, the more should we protest against its being defended by a body-guard of passions, willing to do for it precisely the services which they might equally render to the vulgarest imposture.

2. We were recently accused, amid acknowledgments of our *honesty*, with want of *anxiety* about spiritual truth: and the following justification of the charge was offered: "The Word of God has informed us, that they who seek the truth shall find it; that they who ask for holy wisdom shall receive it; but it must be a *really anxious inquiry*—a heart-felt desire for the blessing. 'If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.' * Such promises are express,—they cannot be broken,—God will give the blessing to the *sincere, anxious* inquirer. But the two qualities must go together. A man may be sincere in his ignorance and spiritual torpor; but let the full

* Prov. ii. 1.

desire for God's favour, his pardoning mercy, and his enlightening grace spring up in the heart, and we may rest assured that the desire will soon be accomplished. Admitting, then, the sincerity of Unitarians, we doubt their anxiety, for we are well persuaded from God's promises, that if they possessed both, they would be delivered from their miserable system, and be brought to the knowledge of the truth."*

The praise of our "*sincerity*," conveyed in these bland sentences, we are anxious to decline: not that we undervalue the quality: but because we find, on near inspection, that it has all been emptied out of the word before its presentation, and the term comes to us hollow and worthless. It affords a specimen of the mode in which alone our opponents appear able to give any credit to heretics: many phrases of approbation they freely apply to us; but they take care to draw off the whole meaning first. We must reject these "Greek presents:" and we are concerned that any Christian divine can so torture and desecrate the names of virtue, as to make them instruments of disparagement and injury. This play with words, which every conscience should hold sacred, and every lip pronounce with reverence,—this careless and unmeaning application of them in discourse,—indicates a loose adhesion to the mind of the ideas denoted by them, which we regard with unfeigned astonishment and grief. What, let me ask, can be the "*sincerity*" of an inquirer, who is not "*anxious*" *about the truth*? How can *he* be "*sincerely*" persuaded that he sees, who voluntarily shuts his eyes? Unless this word is to be degraded into a synonyme for indolence and self-complacency, no professed seeker of truth must have the praise of sincerity, who does not abandon all worship of his own state of mind as already perfect, who is not ready to listen to every calm doubt as to the voice of heaven,—to un-

* Mr. Dalton's Lecture on the Eternity of Future Rewards and Punishments, p. 760.

dertake with gratitude the labour of reaching new knowledge,—to maintain his faith and his profession in scrupulous accordance with his perception of evidence; and, at any moment of awakening, to spring from his most brilliant dreams into God's own morning light, with a matin hymn upon his lips for his new-birth from darkness and from sleep. The earnestness implied in this state of mind is perhaps not precisely the same, as that with which our Trinitarian opponents seem to be familiar. The "anxiety" which they appear to feel for themselves is, to keep their existing state of belief: the "anxiety" which they feel for us is, that we should have it. We are to hold ourselves ready for a change; they are not to be expected to desire it. If a doubt of *our opinions* should occur *to us*, we are to foster it carefully, and follow it out as a beckoning of the Holy Spirit: if a doubt of *their sentiments* should occur *to them*, they are to crush it on the spot, as a reptile-thought sent of Satan to tempt them. "Our aim," says the concluding Lecturer again, "has been to beget a deep spirit of inquiry:"* and so has ours, I would reply: only you and we have severally prosecuted this aim in different ways. We have personally listened, and personally inquired, and earnestly recommended all whom our influence could reach, to do the same: and few indeed will be the Unitarian libraries containing one of these series of lectures, that will not exhibit the other by its side. You have entered this controversy, evidently strange to our literature and history; and any deficiency in such reading before, has not been compensated by anxiety to listen now. Your people have been warned against us, and are taught to regard the study of our publications as blasphemy at second-hand: and were they really so simple as to act upon your avowed wish "to beget a deep spirit of inquiry," and plunge into the investigation of Unitarian authors, and judge for themselves of Unitarian worship, they would speedily hear the

* Mr. Dalton's Lecture, p. 760.

word of recal, and discover that they were practically disappointing the whole object of this controversy.

Having said thus much respecting the unmeaning use of language in the Lecturer's disparaging estimate of Unitarian "anxiety," we may profitably direct a moment's attention to the *reasoning* which it involves. It presents us with the standing fallacy of intolerance, which is sufficiently rebuked by being simply exhibited. Our opponents reason thus:

God will not permit the really anxious fatally to err:
The Unitarians *do* fatally err:
Therefore, The Unitarians are not really anxious.

Now it is clear that we must conceive our opponents to be no less mistaken than they suppose us to be. They are as far from us, as we from them; and from either point, taken as a standard, the measure of error must be the same. Moreover, we cannot but eagerly assent to the principle of the Lecturer's first premiss, that God will never let the truly anxious fatally miss their way. So that there is nothing, in the nature of the case, to prevent our turning this same syllogism, with a change in the names of the parties, against our opponents. Yet we should shrink, with severe self-reproach, from drawing any such unfavourable conclusion respecting them, as they deduce of us. Accordingly, we manage our reasoning thus:

God will not permit the really anxious fatally to err:
The Trinitarians show themselves to be really anxious:
Therefore, The Trinitarians do not fatally err.

Our opponents are more sure that their judgment is in the right, than that their neighbours' conscience is in earnest. They sacrifice other men's characters to their own self-con-

fidence: we would rather distrust our self-confidence, an rely on the visible signs of a good and careful mind. W honour other men's hearts, rather than our own heads. Ho can it be just, to make the agreement between an opponent' opinion and our own, the criterion of his proper conduct c the inquiry? Every man feels the injury, the moment th rule is turned against himself: and every good man shoul be ashamed to direct it against his brother.

3. Our reverend opponents affect to have laboured unde a great disadvantage, from the absence of any recognize standard of Unitarian belief. 'We give you,' they say, 'ou Articles and Creeds, which we unanimously undertake t defend, and which expose a definite object to all heretica attacks. In return, you can furnish us with no authorise exposition of your system; but leave us to gather our know ledge of it from individual writers, for whose opinions yo refuse to be responsible, and whose reasonings, when refute by us, you can conveniently disown.'

Plausible as this complaint may appear, I venture to affirm that it is vastly easier to ascertain the common belief of Uni tarians, than that of the members of the Established Church and for this plain reason, that with us there really is such thing as a common faith, though defined in no confession; i the Anglican Church there is not, though articles and creed profess it. The characteristic tenets of Unitarian Christianit are so simple and unambiguous, that little scope exists fo variety in their interpretation: to the propositions expressin them all their professors attach *distinct and the same* ideas;— so far, at least, as such accordance is possible in relation t subjects inaccessible both to demonstration and to experienc But the Trinitarian hypothesis, venturing with presumptuou analysis far into the Divine psychology, presents us wit ideas confessedly inapprehensible; propounded in languag which, if used in its ordinary sense, is self-contradictory, an if not, is unmeaning, and ready in its emptiness to be fille

by any arbitrary interpretation;—and actually understood so variously by those who subscribe to them, that the Calvinist and the Arminian, the Tritheist and the Sabellian, unite to praise them. Indeed, in the history of the English Church, so visible is the sweep of the centre of orthodoxy over the whole space from the confines of Romanism to the verge of Unitarianism, that our ecclesiastical chronology is measured by its oscillations. Our respected opponents know full well, that it is not necessary to search beyond the clergy of this town, or even beyond the morning and afternoon preaching in one and the same church, in order to encounter greater contrasts in theology, than could be found in a whole library of Unitarian divinity. What mockery then to refer us to these articles as expositions of clerical belief, when the moment we pass beyond the words, and address ourselves to the sense, every shade of contrariety appears: and no one definite conception can be adopted of such a doctrine as that of the Trinity, without some church expositor or other starting up to rebuke it as a misrepresentation! How poor the pride of uniformity, which contents itself with lip-service to the symbol, in the midst of heart-burnings about the reality!

In order to test the force of the objection to which I am referring, let us advert, in detail, to the topics which exhibit the Unitarian and Trinitarian theology in most direct opposition. It will appear that the advantage of unity lies, in this instance, on the side of heresy; and that if multiformity be a prime characteristic of error, there is a wide difference between orthodoxy and truth. There are four great subjects comprised in the controversy between the church and ourselves: the nature of God; of Christ; of sin; of punishment. On these several points (which, considered as involving on our part denials of previous ideas, may be regarded as containing the *negative* elements of our belief) all our modern writers, without material variation or exception, maintain the following doctrines:

UNITARIAN DOCTRINES, *opposed to* CHURCH DOCTR	
(1.) The Personal Unity of God.	(1.) The Trinity in Ur
(2.) The Simplicity of Nature in Christ.	(2.) Two distinct Natu Christ.
(3.) The Personal Origin and Identity of Sin.	(3.) The Transferable and Vicarious R of Sin.
(4.) The Finite Duration of Future Suffering.	(4.) The Eternity of He ments.

Now no one at all familiar with polemical literatu deny, that the modes and ambiguities of doctrine com in this Trinitarian list, are more numerous than can tected in the parallel "heresies." I am willing indeed mit an exception in respect to the last of the topics, allow that the belief in the finite duration of future punis has opposed itself, in two forms, to the single doct everlasting torments. But when the systems are con at their other corresponding points, the boast of ort uniformity instantly vanishes. Since the primitive je between the Jewish and Gentile Christianity, the rival tween the "Monarchy" and the "Economy," the be in the personal Unity of God, though often severed b from each other, have held that majestic truth in o varied form. Never was there an idea so often lost a covered, yet so absolutely unchanged: a sublime, but sional visitant of the human mind, assuring us of the per oneness of our own nature, as well as the Divine. W point to no unbroken continuity of our great doctrine if we could, we should appeal with no confidence evidence of so dubious a phenomenon; for if a syst ideas once gains possession of society, and attracts to complicated interests and feelings, many causes may to ensure its indefinite preservation. But we can poir

greater phenomenon; to the long and repeated extinction of our favourite belief, to its submersion beneath a dark and restless fanaticism; and its invariable resurrection, like a necessary intuition of the soul, in times of purer light, with its features still the same; stamped with imperishable identity of truth, and, like him to whom it refers, without variableness or shadow of a turning. Meanwhile, who will undertake to enumerate and define the succession of Trinities by which this doctrine has been bewildered and banished? Passing by the Aristotelian, the Platonic, the Ciceronian, the Cartesian Trinity,—quitting the stormy disputes, and contradictory decisions of the early councils, shall we find among even the modern fathers of our national church, any approach to unanimity? Am I to be content with the doctrine of Bishop Bull, and subordinate the Son to the Father as the sole fountain of divinity? Or must I rise to the Tritheism of Waterland and Sherlock? or, accepting the famous decision of the University of Oxford, descend with Archbishop Whately, to the modal Trinity of South and Wallis? Are we to understand the phrase, three persons, to mean three beings united by "perichoresis," three "mutual inexistences," three "modes," three "differences," three "contemplations," or three "somewhats;" or, being told that this is but a vain prying into a mystery, shall we be satisfied to leave the phrase without idea at all? It is to the last degree astonishing to hear from Trinitarian divines, the praises of uniformity of belief; seeing that it is one of the chief labours of ecclesiastical history to record the incessant effort, vain to the present day, to give some stability of meaning to the fundamental doctrines of their faith.

The same remark applies, with little modification, to the opposite views respecting the person of the Saviour. It is true that Unitarians, agreed respecting the singleness of nature in Christ, differ respecting the natural rank of that nature, whether his soul were human or angelic. But, f

this solitary variety among these heretics, how r
doctrines of the Logos and the Incarnation does o
dox literature contain? Can any one affirm, that whe
council of Ephesus had arbitrated between the Euty
doctrine of absorption, and the Nestorian doctrine of se
tion, all doubt and ambiguity was removed by the n
phrase "Hypostatic union?" Since the monophysite
test was at its height, has the Virgin Mary been left in
disputed possession of her title as "Mother of God?"
the Eternal Generation of the Son encountered no orth
suspicions, and the Indwelling scheme received no orth
support? And if we ask these questions: "What re
tively happened to the two natures on the cross? wha
become of Christ's human soul now? is it separate fron
Godhead like any other immortal spirit, or is it added t
Deity, so as to introduce into his nature a new and fo
element?" shall we receive from the many voices o
church but one accordant answer? Nay, do the autho
this controversy suppose that, during its short continu
they have been able to maintain their unanimity? If
do, I believe that any reader who thinks it worth whi
register the varieties of error, would be able to unde
them. If the diversities of doctrine cannot easily and
be shown to amount to palpable inconsistencies, this mu
ascribed, I believe, to the mystic and technical phraseo
the substitute rather than the expression for precise ide
which has become the vernacular dialect of orthodox divi
The jargon of theology affords a field too barren, to be
vigorous a weed as an undisputed contradiction.

It is needless to dwell on the numerous forms under v
the doctrine of atonement has been held by those who
scribe the articles of our national church: while its Unit
opponents have taken their fixed station on the per
character and untransferable nature of sin. One writer
us that only the human nature perished on the cross; an

that God himself expired: some say, that Christ suffered no more intensely, but only more "meritoriously," than many a martyr; others, that he endured the whole quantity of torment due to the wicked whom he redeemed: some, that it is the spotlessness of his manhood that is imputed to believers; others, that it is the holiness of his Deity. From the high doctrine of satisfaction to the very verge of Unitarian heresy, every variety of interpretation has been given to the language of the established formularies respecting Christian redemption. Nor is it yet determined whether, in the lottery of opinion, the name of Owen, Sykes, or Magee, shall be drawn for the prize of orthodoxy.

And if from those parts of our belief, to which the accidents of their historical origin have given a *negative* character, we turn to those which are *positive*, not the slightest reason will appear for charging them with uncertainty and fluctuation. All Unitarian writers maintain the Moral Perfection and Fatherly Providence of the Infinite Ruler; the Messiahship of Jesus Christ, in whose person and spirit there is a Revelation of God and a Sanctification for Man; the Responsibility and Retributive Immortality of men; and the need of a pure and devout heart of Faith, as the source of all outward goodness and inward communion with God. These great and self-luminous points, bound together by natural affinity, constitute the fixed centre of our religion. And on subjects beyond this centre, we have no wider divergences than are found among those who attach themselves to an opposite system. For example, the relations between Scripture and Reason, as evidences and guides in questions of doctrine, are not more unsettled among us, than are the relations between Scripture and Tradition in the Church. Nor is the perpetual authority of the "Christian rites" so much in debate among our ministers, as the efficacy of the Sacraments among the clergy. In truth, our diversities of sentiment affect far less *what* we believe, than the question *why* we believe it.

ferent modes of reasoning, and different results of interpre
tion, are no doubt to be found among our several autho
We all make our appeal to the records of Christianity: b
we have voted no particular commentator into the seat
authority. And is not this equally true of our opponen
church? Their articles and creeds furnish no textual expo
tions of Scripture, but only results and deductions from
study. And so variously have these results been elicit
from the sacred writings, that scarcely a text can be adduc
in defence of the Trinitarian scheme, which some witne
unexceptionably orthodox may not be summoned to prove i
applicable. In fine, we have no greater variety of critical a
exegetical opinion than the divines from whom we dissen
while the system of Christianity in which our Scriptural l
bours have issued, has its leading characteristics better d
termined and more apprehensible, than the scheme whi
the articles and creeds have vainly laboured to define.

The refusal to embody our sentiments in any authoritati
formula appears to strike observers as a whimsical excepti
to the general practice of churches. The peculiarity has h
its origin in hereditary and historical associations: but it h
its defence in the noblest principles of religious freedom a
Christian communion. At present, it must suffice to sa
that our Societies are dedicated, not to theological opinio
but to religious worship: that they have maintained t
unity of the spirit, without insisting on any unity of do
trine: that Christian liberty, love, and piety are their esse
tials in perpetuity, but their Unitarianism an accident of
few or many generations;—which has arisen, and mig
vanish, without the loss of their identity. We believe in t
mutability of religious systems, but the imperishable chara
ter of the religious affections;—in the progressiveness
opinion within, as well as without, the limits of Christianit
Our forefathers cherished the same conviction: and so, n
having been born intellectual bondsmen, we desire to lea

our successors free. Convinced that uniformity of doctrine can never prevail, we seek to attain its only good,—peace on earth and communion with heaven,—without it. We aim to make a true Christendom,—a commonwealth of the faithful,—by the binding force, not of ecclesiastical creeds, but of spiritual wants, and Christian sympathies: and indulge the vision of a Church that "in the latter days shall arise," like "the mountain of the Lord," bearing on its ascent the blossoms of thought proper to every intellectual clime, and withal massively rooted in the deep places of our humanity, and gladly rising to meet the sunshine from on high.

And now, friends and brethren, let us say a glad farewell to the fretfulness of controversy, and retreat again, with thanksgiving, into the interior of our own venerated truth. Having come forth, at the severer call of duty, to do battle for it, with such force as God vouchsafes to the sincere, let us go in to live and worship beneath its shelter. They tell you, it is not the true faith. Perhaps not: but then, you think it so; and that is enough to make your duty clear, and to draw from it, as from nothing else, the very peace of God. May be, we are on our way to something better, unexistent and unseen as yet; which may penetrate our souls with nobler affection, and give a fresh spontaneity of love to God and all immortal things. Perhaps there cannot be the truest life of faith, except in scattered individuals, till this age of conflicting doubt and dogmatism shall have passed away. Dark and leaden clouds of materialism hide the heaven from us: red gleams of fanaticism pierce through, vainly striving to reveal it; and not till the weight is heaved from off the air, and the thunders roll down the horizon, will the serene light of God flow upon us, and the blue infinite embrace us again. Meanwhile, we must reverently love the faith we have: to quit it for one that we have not, were to lose the breath of life, and die.

NOTE.

The Jewish Passover not a proper Sacrifice.

In an essay on "the one great end of the life and death of Christ," Dr. Priestley makes the following observations on the words (occurring in 1 Cor. v. 7,) "*Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us*:" "This allusion to the paschal lamb makes it also probable, that the death of Christ is called a sacrifice only by way of figure, because these two (viz., sacrifice and the paschal lamb) are quite different and inconsistent ideas. The paschal lamb is never so much as termed a sacrifice in the Old Testament, except once, Exodus xii. 27, where it is called "*the sacrifice of the Lord's passover.*" However, it could only be called a sacrifice in this place, in some secondary and partial sense, and not in the proper and primary sense of the word; for there was no priest employed upon the occasion, no altar made use of, no burning, nor any part offered to the Lord; all which circumstances were essential to every proper sacrifice. The blood indeed was sprinkled upon the door-posts, but this was originally nothing more than a token to the destroying angel to pass by that house; for there is no propitiation or atonement said to be made by it: and the paschal lamb is very far from having been ever called a *sin-offering*, or said to be killed on account of sin." *

Every reader, I apprehend, understands this description of the manner of celebrating the passover, to refer to the particular "occasion" spoken of "in this place" (Exod. xii. 27). 'The writer of this verse,' argues Dr. Priestley, 'could not use the word *sacrifice* in its strictest sense; for his own narrative of the very celebration to which it is applied, describes it as destitute of all the essentials of a proper sacrifice.' The allusion to the blood sprinkled upon the

* Theological Repository, vol. i. p. 215, and Priestley's Works, by Rutt, vol. vii. pp. 243, 244.

door-posts, as "a token to the destroying angel to pass by that house," immediately connects Dr. Priestley's assertions with the Egyptian passover. By cutting out this allusion, and otherwise breaking up the passage in quotation, Archbishop Magee has contrived to conceal its character as an historical description of a single occasion, and to give it the air of a general account of the Jewish paschal ceremony in all ages. Having accomplished this, and obtained for himself the liberty of travelling for a reply over the whole Hebrew history and traditions, he says; "Now in answer to these several assertions, I am obliged to state the direct contradiction of each; for, 1st, the passage in Exodus xii. 27, is *not* the only one, in which the paschal lamb is termed זבח, a *sacrifice*, it being expressly so called in no less than four passages in Deuteronomy (xvi. 2, 4, 5, 6), and also in Exodus xxxiv. 25, and its parallel passage xxiii. 18.—2. A priest *was* employed.—3. An altar *was* made use of.—4. There *was* a burning, and a part offered to the Lord: the inwards being burnt upon the altar, and the blood poured out at the foot thereof." * The *last three* of these "direct contradictions" establish nothing but this Prelate's habit (not adopted, we may presume, without urgent necessity) of misrepresenting his opponents in order to confute them: for it is quite needless to observe that, in the Egyptian passover, of which alone Dr. Priestley speaks, there was neither priest, altar, nor burning: and though the Archbishop should be able to detect all these elements in a festival of King Josiah's time, he will have proved no error against the passage which he criticises. In his *first* contradiction, he would have gained an advantage over his opponent, had not his eagerness induced him to strain his evidence too far. A more modest disputant would have thought it sufficient to reckon *three successive verses* (Deut. xvi. 4, 5, 6) *in which the same phrase is simply repeated,* as a *single* instead of a *triple* authority: the other citation from the same passage is not to the point, as will presently be shown: and in one of the verses quoted from Exodus (xxiii. 18) the word זבח does not occur at all in relation to the passover. So that Dr. Priestley having discovered two passages *too few,* the Prelate makes compensation by discovering two passages *too many.*

Having said thus much in reference to Archbishop Magee's fairness to his opponent, I will add a few strictures on the reasonings by which he supports his general position, that the passover was a

* Magee on the Atonement, vol. i. pp. 291, 292, 5th edit.

proper sacrifice. He adduces two arguments from *words*, and three from *facts*. 1. The word זבח, *sacrifice*, is applied to the passover. —2. The word קרבן, *Corban*, a *sacred offering*, is applied to it.— 3. The slaying of the lamb took place at the tabernacle or temple.— 4. The blood was offered at the foot of the altar.—5. The fat and entrails were burnt as an offering on the altar fire.

(1.) It has been already stated, that Archbishop Magee has improperly adduced *two* passages, as applying the word *sacrifice* to the passover. The first of these is Exod. xxiii. 18, where it is said: "Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread; neither shall the fat of my sacrifice remain till morning." The second clause here undoubtedly refers to the paschal lamb: but the term "*sacrifice*" occurring in it is not the proper translation of the original; nor is the Hebrew word the same that is correctly so rendered in the first clause. The phrases being not the same, but discriminated, in the two parts of the verse, the less reason exists for supposing that both allude to the passover. More probably, the reference in the former is to the sacrifices appropriate to the *feast of unleavened bread*, which being contiguous to the passover in time, is naturally conjoined with it in the precepts of this verse.

The second irrelevant passage is Deut. xvi. 2: "Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the Lord thy God, of the flock and of the herd." Since the paschal *lamb* could not be taken "*from the herd*," it is evident that the word "*passover*," is used here in a wider sense,* to denote *the joint eight days' festival, including that of unleavened bread*, when *heifers* were offered "from the herd." This more comprehensive meaning of the term is frequent, not merely with Josephus and the later Jewish writers, but in the Hebrew Scriptures themselves; and renders inconclusive most of the arguments by which the passover is made to assume the appearance of a proper sacrifice. An example occurs in the very next verse: "*Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread therewith*," that is, with the passover; and in 2 Chron. xxxv. 9: "Conaniah also (and other persons) gave unto the priests for the *passover offerings*, 2,600 small cattle, and 300 *oxen*."

* This is admitted by a learned writer, with whose work on sacrifices Archbishop Magee was familiar, and who had anticipated most of his arguments on the subject of the passover: "Cum ad Paschale sacrificium etiam pecudes ex armento lectas in sacris literis imperatas legimus, non designatur illa victima, quæ פסח proprie appellatur, sed alia quædam sacrificia cidem victimæ adjungenda." —*Outram de Sacrificiis*, lib. i. ch. xiii. § 10.

Lord thy God shall choose." Whatever doubt may exist about the *slaying*, the *roasting and eating* could not take place at the tabernacle.

The law, then, nowhere prescribes the slaying of the paschal lamb at the sanctuary. But neither does it *forbid* this; and therefore we are not surprised that the act should take place there, on any particular occasion rendering such arrangement obviously convenient; or as a general practice, in concession to any strong interests tending to draw it thither. When, therefore, a long period of idolatry and political confusion had obliterated from the minds of the Israelites the very memory of their religious rites; when new modes of worship had become habitual, and the annual festival had grown strange; when, to induce them to come up to the passover at all, their monarch was obliged to provide for them the whole number of their victims, and the officiating Levites needed to study again the appointed ceremonies of the season; it is no wonder that king Josiah thought it expedient to collect "the whole congregation" at the temple, and there to let them witness the form of slaying, by well-trained hands, and receive instruction how to complete the celebration of their feast. Such was the solemn passover described in 2 Chron. xxxv. and that in the reign of Hezekiah, mentioned in the thirtieth chapter of the same book; the circumstances of both which were too peculiar to afford evidence of a general practice, much less of a legal essential.

That in later times it was the custom to slay the paschal lambs in the Temple courts, there can be no doubt. The system of ecclesiastical police, and the operation of sacerdotal interests created the practice. It was the business of the priests to see to the execution of the festival-law; to ascertain who incurred the penalty due to neglect of the prescribed rite: to register the numbers of those who observed it; and to take care that neither too many nor too few should partake at the same table. All this required that the heads of families should present themselves, and report their intended arrangements to the authorities at the temple. The priests moreover, being the judges of the qualifications of the animals for the paschal table, availed themselves of this power, to become graziers and provision-dealers. As the lambs must be presented for their inspection, and were liable to be turned back if pronounced imperfect, it became more convenient to buy the victim at once at the Temple courts: and on the spot where the purchase was made, the slaying would naturally follow. Lightfoot,

toms present themselves in the historical instances of the commemoration which we possess, they cannot be received as authoritative illustrations of its intended character, but as accessaries appended by convenience, tradition, or sacerdotal influence.* With this remark I proceed to the next argument.

(3.) The slaying of the paschal lamb is said to have been restricted to the tabernacle or temple.

The only passage from the law, adduced to prove this, is Deut. xvi. 2, 5, 6, where it is said, "Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee; but *at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose* to place his name in, there shalt thou sacrifice the passover at even." The reader might naturally suppose that *Jerusalem* was here denoted by the phrase, "the place which the Lord thy God shall choose," in contradistinction from the provincial cities described as "any of thy gates;" but Archbishop Magee sets aside this interpretation, by referring us to this very same expression in Deut. xii. 5, 6, 11, 14, where it evidently means the *tabernacle or temple*, not the city; for a multitude of rites are there enumerated, to be performed, "in the place that the Lord shall choose," which could be celebrated only at the sanctuary. It so happens, however, that in this enumeration, the *Passover* is precisely *the one thing which is not mentioned*; from which we might fairly infer, that it was not among the ceremonies limited to the sanctuary; and further, that in addition to the vague description of place common to both passages, there occurs exclusively in the latter, the additional one, "there shall ye eat, BEFORE THE LORD YOUR GOD," which is well known to be the usual mode of designating the tabernacle. And that in the passover-law, the locality intended was the city, and not the sanctuary, is evident from a verse which Archbishop Magee has not thought it necessary to quote, though it is the immediate sequel of his citation; "and thou shalt *roast and eat it* (the paschal lamb) in the place which the

* The following passages constitute the whole passover-law: Exod. xii. 3—11, 14, 24—27, 43—49. Lev. xxiii. 5. Num. ix. 10—14; xxviii. 16. Deut. xvi. 1, 4—7. We have here the original statutes provided for the perpetual regulation of the rite: and in any discussion respecting its character, the appeal should be to these alone. The advocates for its sacrificial nature must be aware that this rule would destroy their whole case.

I subjoin a list of the passages relating to the feast of unleavened bread: Exod. xii. 15—20; xiii. 6—10; xxiii. 18, first clause; xxxiv. 25, first clause. Lev. xxiii. 6—14. Num. xxviii. 17—25. Deut. xvi. 2—4, 8.

who were employed, for reasons already assigned, to slay the lambs on these two occasions, instead of the heads of families, on whom that office properly devolved. The altar is not named: but as the blood must be disposed of *somewhere*, and as there was a drain for that purpose at the foot of the altar, no doubt it was there that the priests sprinkled or poured it away. The act was simply an act of cleanliness,—in plain speech, a resort to the sink,—from which theology can extract nothing profitable. The priests were the parties to perform the office because no other persons could approach the altar under penalty of death. In later times, when the sacerdotal influence had made the temple the scene of the paschal slaughter, each head of a family killed his own lamb in the court: the blood, received in a basin, was handed to the first of a row of priests reaching to the foot of the altar, where it was poured away at the usual place.* In this there is nothing of the nature of an offering or proper sacrifice.

(5.) But it is said that the fat and entrails were placed on the altar fire and burned.

Archbishop Magee says, that this "may be collected from the accounts given of the ceremony of the passover in the passages already referred to."† It requires perhaps that able controversialist's peculiar mode of "managing passages" (to use a favourite phrase of his own) to elicit this from the authorities named; at least, I am unable, after careful examination of them, to conjecture what he means. The passages however are before my readers, and I must leave the assertion to their judgment. Meanwhile, I must conclude, that there is absolutely no trace in Scripture of such a practice as is here pronounced to be one of the essentials of the passover.

I am aware that there is *Talmudical* authority for considering this "burning" as a part of the process connected, in later times, with the killing of the paschal lamb."‡ It was probably one of the modifications of the rite, introduced by the priests on its transference from the private homes of the people to the temple. The original law required, that the lamb should be roasted whole, not even the entrails

* See Lightfoot's Temple Service, ch. xii. sec. 5. "The Mishna says: Mactat Israelita, excipit sanguinem sacerdos."—The Treatise *Pesachim*, in Surenhus. ii. 153.

† P. 294.

‡ See Lightfoot's Temple Service, xii. 5, and the Treatise *Pesachim*, Surenh. ii. 135.

being removed; it also enjoined, that whatever was left should be immediately burned with fire, and every trace of it destroyed before morning.* This private burning was clearly no religious and sacrificial act, though, perhaps, a provision against any superstitious use of the remnants: and it is easy to perceive, that the parts thus destroyed would be the same, which subsequently it was the custom of the priests to consume on the altar fire. When the killing became a collective act, and the temple the scene of it, doubtless both people and priests thought it more cleanly and agreeable to burn the parts which were sure to be left, *before hand* on the public fire, than *afterwards* on the hearths of their private dwellings: and it would require a very illiberal interpreter to pronounce this a violation of the original law, the spirit of which it certainly observed. This view, which treats the burning on the altar as simply a mode of consumption, substituted for the destruction of the same worthless parts at home, is less insulting to the Jewish religion than the opinion which discerns here an act of worship. The Jews were certainly a very coarse people, and offered many disagreeable things to God: but really, such a gift as this is without any parallel. They always,—in obedience to their law,—presented *something* valuable (sometimes the whole animal, sometimes the breast and right shoulder), either to Jehovah on the altar, or to his ministers the priests :† and the pious Jew would have indignantly resented the idea of quitting the temple courts with the whole value of his sacrifice on his shoulder, and only the refuse remaining in the sanctuary.

By law, then, there was nothing of the paschal lamb burned on the altar: and by custom there was no part offered to Jehovah or given to the priests: and without these characteristics, there is no proper sacrifice.

Archbishop Magee admits, that the ceremony of laying the hand on the head of the victim, which was observed in the undoubted sacrifices, did not take place in the rite under consideration: and he notices the statement of Philo, that the animal was slain, not by the priest, but by the individual presenting it.‡ He considers Philo to have been mistaken, however, in his assertion that this immolation by private hand was peculiar to the passover; and cites the language of

* Exod. xii. 9, 10. The phrase "*the purtenance thereof*," in the common version, means "*the entrails thereof*," קִרְבּוֹ.

† See Lev. i. 9, 13, 17; vi. 15—18, 26, 29; vii. 3, 6—10, 14, 15, 30—36.

‡ Pp. 295, 296.

Lev. i. 4, 5; iii. 2; iv. 24, to show that the burnt offering, the peace-offering, the sin-offering, might all be slain by the offerer. Certainly these passages appear to leave such permission open to the Israelitish worshipper: but it seems more likely that the sacrifices here enumerated were intended to be made by the hands of the priest: nor would it be easy to reconcile the liberty of private sacrifice with the sacerdotal duties and privileges defined in Num. xviii. 1—7. As to the actual practice, it cannot be reasonably doubted that Philo was correct: and his expressions seem to imply that, in the paschal rite, the priest might be altogether dispensed with, and his intervention required for no religious act. He says: "On the fourteenth day of this month, at the coming of the full moon, is celebrated the public festival of the passover, called in the Chaldee language the Pascha: when, instead of the private citizen presenting his victim at the altar to be slain by the priest, the whole nation officiates in sacred things, every one in turn bringing and immolating his own victim with his own hands. The whole people is festive and joyous, every one being entitled to the dignity of priesthood."* He uses similar expressions in his treatise on the decalogue: The festival, "which the Hebrews in their language call the Pascha," is a time "when each and all of them slay their victim, without waiting for the services of their priests: the law, on an appointed day of every year, conceding to the whole people the sacerdotal functions, to the extent of permitting them to officiate for themselves at a sacrifice."† This language evidently implies, that *every essential part* of the passover rites, every act necessary to constitute and complete its character as a religious celebration, was performed by private hand: so that the auxiliary operations of the priests,—the pouring out of the blood and burning the inwards,—must be regarded as non-essentials and accessaries; menial contributions to the main act; and in the performance of which, therefore, the usual law, forbidding to the non-official Jew all approach to the altar, came into effect again. Had the paschal celebration required, as an indispensable ingredient in it, any transactions at the altar, the private Israelite, being temporarily invested with whatever sacerdotal privileges were needful for the rite, would have gone himself to make his offering. Philo indeed obviously conceived of the subsequent part of the ceremony, in which the temple and the priest had no share,—the domestic meal which took place in

* De vitâ Mosis, p. 686. E. † De decalogo, p. 766. D.

the several homes of the people,—as its peculiarly sacred element: "Each house," he says, "at that time put on the form and sanctity of a temple, the victim that has been slain being made ready for a suitable meal."* Fond as this writer is of types, it is impossible to express the retrospective and commemorative character of the passover more emphatically than in his words: *ὑπομνηστικὴ τῆς μεγίστης ἀπουσίας ἐστὶν ἡ ἑορτὴ, καὶ χαριστήριος.*†

In one passage of his note on the Passover, Archbishop Magee appears to admit that the paschal lamb was not a "*sacrifice for sin*," and affirms that he "would not dispute with Dr. Priestley any conclusion he might draw from so productive a premiss."‡ Yet, a few pages further on, he quotes with apparent approbation the arguments by which Cudworth sought to prove the rite to be an *expiatory sacrifice*.§ I cannot pretend to reconcile these two portions of his Essay. But if the passover cannot be shown to be an expiatory sacrifice, I do not see what the advocates of the doctrine of atonement gain by proving it a sacrifice at all. If the paschal lamb was not a *sin-offering*, to what class did it belong? It must have been either of the eucharistic kind, or else unique and simply commemorative; and so far as the death of Christ was analogous to any *such* offering, it was destitute of expiatory efficacy: and either was an expression of thanksgiving, (which seems absurd) or, like the blood of the lamb sprinkled on the lintel, a mere *sign* of some deliverance which it was not instrumental in effecting, but which, simultaneously perhaps, yet independently occurred. Those, therefore, who are disposed to strain the resemblance between the passover and the cross, must either maintain the *expiatory* nature of the Jewish right, or admit the Lord's Supper to be, not even the celebration of a real deliverance, but the mere *commemoration of a sign*.

* De sept. et fest. p. 1190. B.

† *loc. cit.* After the remarks which have been made on the word זבח as an epithet of the passover, it is hardly necessary to notice the application to the same rite of the word *θυσία* by Philo and Josephus. It must be clear to any one who will open Trommius or Biel at the word, that it will not bear the stress laid upon it by Archbishop Magee. No one denies that the paschal lamb was slain and eaten, in observance of a religious celebration, in obedience to a religious law, and in expression of religious feeling; and this surely is enough to attract to it the word *θυσία*. In itself, however, the term, according to Biel, does not necessarily denote even so much as this. He defines it *hostia, sacrificium*, etiam *epulum* ac *profana manducatio*: and he exemplifies this latter meaning by reference to Judg. vi. 18. Biel's Thesaurus, Ed. Schleusner in v.

‡ P. 292. § Pp. 298, 299.

Postscript.

In the notes to the Sixth Lecture of this series (p. 89—92,) I have adduced an example of Archbishop Magee's misrepresentation of Mr. Belsham, and stated that the Prelate had quoted his opponent falsely. In comparing the two authors, I employed the latest editions of both their works; not being able to procure a copy of the first edition of the Calm Enquiry, which has been out of print for twenty-two years. At the same time, I thought it only just to insert the following note: "There is a possibility, which I think it right to suggest, of a difference between the two editions of Mr. B.'s work; as, however, the accusation is still found in the newest edition of the Archbishop's book, I conclude that this is not the case. Indeed, even if the Prelate's quotation had been *verbally* true, it would *in spirit* have been no less false; for, at all events, Mr. B. cites the Vulgate, to give evidence as to the *text*, not the *translation*; and had he used the word *renders*, it would only have been because the term naturally occurs when a VERSION is adduced to determine a READING."

I have since obtained a copy of the first edition of the Calm Enquiry; and I hasten to acknowledge that the Archbishop's quotation *is* "*verbally* true," as far as it goes. But I regret to say that this makes only a formal difference in his favour; for by stopping short in his citation, he accomplished the very same object, of leaving an absolutely false impression, which I had supposed him to have effected, in this as in other instances, by direct falsification of his author. He wishes to make it appear, that Mr. Belsham (purposely mistranslating for the occasion,) appeals to a certain verse in the Vulgate in evidence, not of a READING, but of a RENDERING; and so he cites these words from the Calm Enquiry: "The Vulgate renders the text, the first man was of the earth, earthy; the second man was from heaven, heavenly;" but he leaves out the very next words, in which *the point intended to be proved* by this testimony of the Vulgate is cited, "This is not improbably the TRUE READING." Doubtless it was one of Mr. Belsham's *incuriæ* that he did not attend to his italics n his first edition: but the charge of intentional mistranslation is simply injurious; except indeed, that it is also absurd, seeing that Mr. Belsham has put the Latin of his mistranslated passage at the bottom of the page;—a policy which this heresiarch could scarcely have thought safe, unless he had taken his Unitarian readers to be either more "dishonest critics," or more "defective scholars," than even our learned opponents are prepared to think them.

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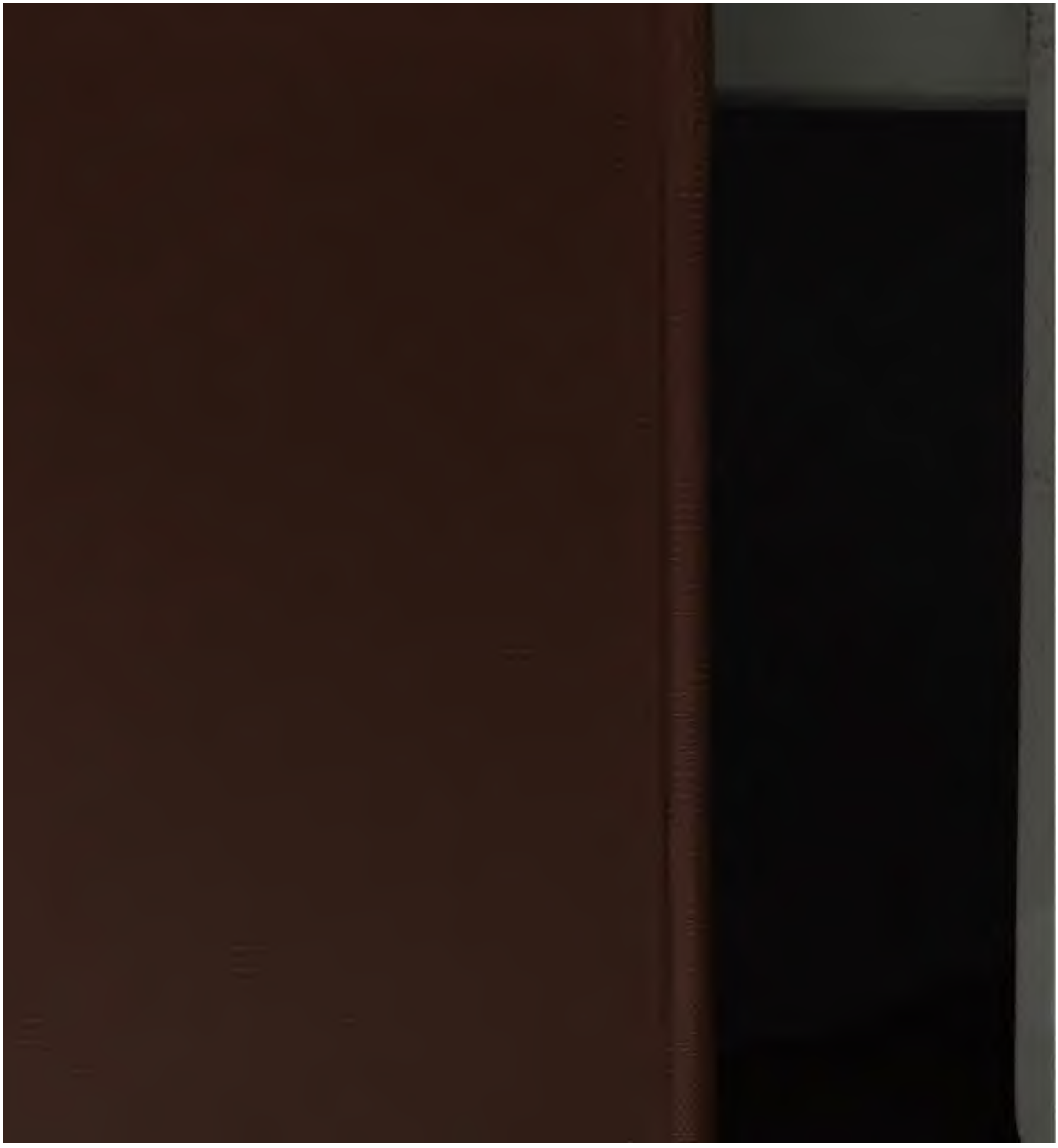
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